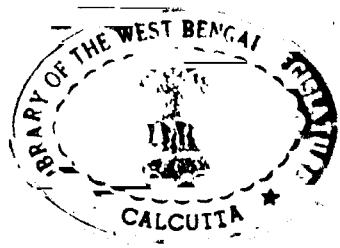
Vol. XVII.—No. 3.



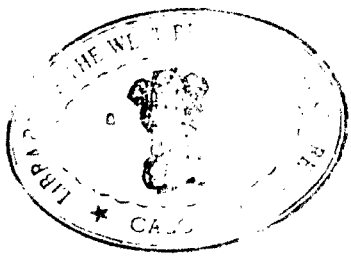
Council Proceedings

Official Report

Bengal Legislative Council

Seventeenth Session, 1925

26th to 28th February, 2nd March, 1925



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GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL.

GOVERNOR OF BENGAL.

His Excellency the Right Hon'ble VICTOR ALEXANDER GEORGE ROBERT BULWER-LYTTON, Earl of Lytton, P.C., G.C.I.E.

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2. Emigration.
3. Immigration.
4. Jurisdiction.
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6. Haj Pilgrimage.

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DEPUTY PRESIDENT.

DR. ABDULLA AL-MAMUN SUHRAWARDY.

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Babu JATINDRA NATH BASU.
Maulvi EKRAMUL HUQ.
Mr. EDWARD VILLIERS.

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Assistant Secretaries to the Council—A. DE C. WILLIAMS, I.C.S., A. M. HUTCHISON and K. N. MAJUMDAR.

Registrar to the Council—J. W. MCKAY.

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Ahmed, Maulvi Tayebuddin. [Mymensingh East (Muhammadan).]
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Chakravorty, Babu Sudarsan. [Rajshahi (Non-Muhammadan).]
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Chaudhury, Maulvi Saiyed Abdur Rob. [Faridpur South (Muhammadan).]
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Das, Mr. C. R. [Midnapore South (Non-Muhammadan).]
Das Gupta, Dr. J. M. [Bogra *cum* Pabna (Non-Muhammadan).]
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De, Mr. K. C., C.I.E. (Nominated Official.)
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Dey, Mr. G. G. (Nominated Official.)
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Huq, Maulvi Ekramul. [Murshidabad (Muhammadan).]

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Joardar, Maulvi Aftab Hossain. [Nadia (Muhammadan).]

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Khan, Maulvi Amanat. [Chittagong (Muhammadan).]
Khan, Maulvi Mahi Uddin. [Rangpur East (Muhammadan).]

L

Lal Mahammed, Haji. [Rajshahi South (Muhammadan).]
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M

Mahammad, Maulvi Basar. [Rangpur West (Muhammadan).]
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Masih, Mr. Syed M. [Faridpur North (Muhammadan).]
Mitra, Babu Jogendra Nath. [Jessore South (Non-Muhammadan).]
Mitra, Babu Satyendra Chandra. [Noakhali (Non-Muhammadan)
Mitter, Sir Provash Chunder, Kt., C.I.E. (Presidency Landholders.)
Moreno, Dr. H. W. B. (Anglo-Indian.)
Morgan, Mr. G. (Bengal Chamber of Commerce.)

Mukerjea, Babu Tarakpath. [Hooghly Rural (Non-Muhammadan).]
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Nazimuddin, Khaje. [Bakarganj South (Muhammadan).]
Neogi, Babu Manmohon. [Mymensingh West (Non-Muhammadan).]

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Phelps, Mr. T. J. (Calcutta Trades Association.)

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Quader, Maulvi Abdul. [Jessore South (Muhammadan).]

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Rahim, the Hon'ble Sir Abd-ur., Kt. (Member, Executive Council.)
Rahman, Mr. A. F. (Dacca University.)
Raikat, Mr. Prasanna Deb. [Jalpaiguri (Non-Muhammadan).]
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Ray, Babu Anilbaran. [Bankura West (Non-Muhammadan).]
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Ray, Kumar Shib Shekhareswar. (Rajshahi Landholders.)
Ray, the Hon'ble Maharaja Bahadur Kshaunish Chandra of Nadia (Member, Executive Council.)
Ray Chaudhuri, Mr. K. C. (Nominated Non-official.)
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Roy, Mr. D. N. [Jessore North (Non-Muhammadan).]

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Roy, Mr. Tarit Bhusan. (Bengal Mahajan Sabha.)
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Roy Chaudhuri, Babu Sailaja Nath. [Khulna (Non-Muhammadan).]
Roy Choudhuri, Rai Bahadur Satyendra Nath. [Bakarganj South (Non-Muhammadan).]
Ror Chowdhury, Raja Manmatha Nath (Dacca Landholder.)

S

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Sarkar, Babu Hemanta Kumar. [Nadia (Non-Muhammadan).]
Sarkar, Maulvi Allah Buksh. [Dacca City (Muhammadan).]
Sarker, Babu Naliniranjan. [Mymensingh East (Non-Muhammadan).]
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Sen Gupta, Mr. J. M. [Chittagong (Non-Muhammadan).]
Singha, Mr. Arun Chandra. (Chittagong Landholders.)
Skinner, Mr. S. A. (Bengal Chamber of Commerce.)
Stephenson, the Hon'ble Sir Hugh, K.C.I.E., C.S.I. (Member, Executive Council.)
Suhrawardy, Dr. A. [24-Parganas Rural (Muhammadan).]
Suhrawardy, Mr Huseyn Shaheed. [Calcutta South (Muhammadan).]
Swan, Mr. J. A. L., C.I.E. (Nominated Official.)

T

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Travers, Mr. W. L., C.I.E., O.B.E. [Rajshahi (European).]

V

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W

Wilson, Lt.-Col R. P., F.R.C.S., D.P.H., V.H.S., I.M.S. (Nominated Official.)
Woodhead, Mr. J. A. (Nominated Official.)

Y

Yasin, Maulvi Muhammad. [Burdwan Division North (Muhammadan).]

THE WEST BENGAL LEGISLATURE
CALCUTTA

THE BENGAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS.

(Official Report of the Seventeenth Session.)

VOLUME XVII.—No. 3.

Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Council assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act.

THE Council met in the Council Chamber in the Town Hall, Calcutta, on Thursday, the 26th February, 1925, at 3 P.M.

Present:

The Hon'ble the President in the Chair, the four Hon'ble Members of the Executive Council and 102 nominated and elected members.

Panel of Chairmen.

Mr. PRESIDENT (the Hon'ble Sir Evan Cotton): Order, order. A vacancy having occurred in the office of sessional Chairman by reason of the resignation by Sir Willoughby Carey of his membership of the Council, I have, under Rule 3 of the Bengal Legislative Council Rules, 1920, nominated Mr. Edward Villiers to be a sessional Chairman in his place.

Starred Questions

(to which oral answers were given).

Police force posted to Tarakeswar during Satyagraha days.

***XXXIII. Babu BORODA PROSAD DEY:** Will the Hon'ble the Member in charge of the Police Department be pleased to state—

(i) what police force was stationed at Tarakeswar during the Satyagraha days;

(ii) at whose instance it was so stationed;

(iii) who met their costs and charges; and

(iv) what is the amount of the same?

MEMBER in charge of POLICE DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Sir Hugh Stephenson): (*i*) The extra force posted to Tarakeswar consisted of 1 Sub-Inspector, 1 Assistant Sub-Inspector, 5 head constables and 95 constables.

(*ii*) At the instance of the local officers.

(*iii*) The force forms part of the normal police establishment and the charge was borne by Government.

(*iv*) Special expenses incurred in travelling and halting of this force amounted to Rs. 6,856-14.

Mr. J. M. SEN GUPTA: Who approached the local officers for the employment of this extra force of police?

The Hon'ble Sir HUGH STEPHENSON: The local officers to discharge their responsibility for the maintenance of order approached Government.

Babu BORODA PROSAD DEY: Will the Hon'ble the Member lay on the table the reports received from the local officers?

The Hon'ble Sir HUGH STEPHENSON: No.

Union Benches and Courts in Hooghly district.

***XXXIV. Babu TARAKNATH MUKHERJEA:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble the Member in charge of the Judicial Department be pleased to state the names of the Union Boards in the district of Hooghly where Union Benches and Courts have been established?

(*b*) What steps are being taken to establish Union Benches and Courts at least in some of the selected Unions in that district?

(*c*) Is the Hon'ble the Member aware

(*i*) that the people of those Unions where these Benches have been established have appreciated their value and utility; and

(*ii*) that they have been greatly relieved of the excessive litigation expenses?

MEMBER in charge of JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Sir Abd-ur-Rahim): (*a*) Begumpur Union Board in the Serampore subdivision.

(*b*) Subdivisional Officers were asked to look into the matter personally in the course of their cold weather tour, and their reports are at present under the consideration of the District Officer, Hooghly.

(*c*) (*i*) People are beginning to appreciate the convenience of a Union Bench and Court, though there were petitions protesting against the continuance of the same at first.

(*ii*) Yes.

Witnesses' undisbursed diet money.

*XXXV. **Dr. J. M. DAS GUPTA:** (a) Will the Hon'ble the Member charge of the Judicial Department be pleased to state whether it is a act that large amounts of witnesses' undisbursed diet money deposited n the Government treasuries lapse every year?

(b) If so, what sums have thus lapsed, year by year, during the ast five years?

The Hon'ble Sir ABD-UR-RAHIM: (a) and (b) Government have o information as to the amounts which lapse each year. No separate ompilation is made of such statistics, and the information asked for can be procured only at the cost of such labour as would not be justified by the value of the result.

Dr. J. M. DAS GUPTA: Is the Hon'ble the Member aware that in one district, that is, the district of Bogra, large sums of money have lapsed to Government, and is it not a fact that taking all the districts into account, very large sums of money do lapse to Government every year? It would certainly be to our advantage to know what figure these sums amount to?

The Hon'ble Sir ABD-UR-RAHIM: I want notice of this question.

Public Prosecutors of the 24-Parganas district.

*XXXVI. **Mr. M. DAUD:** (a) Will the Hon'ble the Member in charge of the Judicial Department be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing the names of the present Public Prosecutor and Assistant Public Prosecutors in the district of the 24-Parganas, with the respective dates of their enrolment as pleaders in that district?

(b) How many of them are Muhammadans?

(c) Will the Hon'ble the Member be pleased to state the sums received by each of such Public Prosecutors in the year 1924?

(d) Is it a fact that briefs for the Crown are sometimes distributed to the pleaders at the discretion of the Additional District Magistrate?

The Hon'ble Sir ABD-UR-RAHIM: (a), (b) and (c) Two statements are laid on the table.

(d) The Additional District Magistrate, being in charge of the department, distributes the briefs when there are more than one case coming on at the same time. They are distributed according to their importance, the seniority and competence of the pleaders; and according to the number of cases pending already in the hands of each pleader. The most important cases go always to the Public Prosecutor.

Statement referred to in the reply to clauses (a) and (b) of starred question No. XXXVI, showing the names of the present Public Prosecutor and Assistant Public Prosecutors in the district of the 24-Parganas, with the respective dates of their enrolment as pleaders of this district.

	Name of the Pleader or Vakil.	Date of enrolment.
1.	Babu Nagendra Nath Banerjee, Public Prosecutor	May, 1904.
2.	Babu Chandra Bhusan Banerjee	February, 1889.
3	Rai Romoni Mohan Banerji Bahadur	June, 1904.
4.	Babu Paresh Nath Banerji	1st July, 1909.
5.	Mr. Satish Chandra Mukherjee	Enrolled in the High Court in 1900 and in the district of 24-Parganas in April, 1904.
6.	Babu Jitendra Sankar Das Gupta	July, 1908.
7.	Babu Jatindra Nath Roy Choudhury	October, 1911.
8.	Babu Girija Bhusan Mukherji	June, 1914.
9.	Babu Nalini Chandra Basu	May, 1907.
10.	Maulvi Golam Ahmed	2nd January, 1907.
11.	Babu Pankoj Kumar Ganguli	Enrolled in High Court on 22nd April, 1913.
12.	Babu Goonesh Chandra Sen	1910.

Statement referred to in the reply to clause (c) of starred question No. XXXVI, showing the amount of fees paid to the Public Prosecutor and other enrolled pleaders who conducted criminal cases on behalf of Government during the year 1924

	Names of pleader.	Amount. Rs.	A.	Remarks.
1.	Babu Nagendra Nath Banerjee, Public Prosecutor	29,329	0	Was allowed special fee in Alipore conspiracy case, Maniktala bomb case, and Sealdah gang case
2.	Babu Chandra Bhusan Banerjee, Vakil	1,232	0	Was absent for about six months.
3.	Rai Romoni Mohan Banerji Bahadur, Vakil	3,100	0	
4.	Babu Paresh Nath Banerji, Vakil ..	5,877	0	
5.	Babu Satish Chandra Mukherjee, Vakil	1,776	0	
6.	Babu Jitendra Sankar Das Gupta, Vakil	1,252	8	
7.	Babu Jatindra Nath Roy Chowdhury, Vakil	712	8	
8.	Babu Girija Bhusan Mukherji, Vakil	1,397	8	
9.	Babu Nalini Chandra Basu, Vakil ..	250	0	
10.	Maulvi Golam Ahmed, Vakil ..	312	8	Since August, 1924.
11.	Babu Pankoj Kumar Ganguli, Vakil	968	0	
12.	Babu Goonesh Chandra Sen, Vakil ..	2,582	0	Was junior in the Alipore conspiracy case, which lasted for a long time.

Babu BEJOY KRISHNA BOSE: Is the Hon'ble the Member aware that there are only 3 or 4 Government pleaders out of a total number of about 400 pleaders?

The Hon'ble Sir ABD-UR-RAHIM: The question does not refer to Government pleaders, but only to the Public Prosecutor.

Babu BEJOY KRISHNA BOSE: My question was whether out of 400 pleaders of the Alipore Court, only 3 or 4 of the most senior get briefs?

The Hon'ble Sir ABD-UR-RAHIM: The matter is being inquired into.

Unstarred Questions

(answers to which were laid on the table).

Reasons for the arrest of Babu Krishna Kumar Mitra and the late Babu Aswini Kumar Datta.

27. **Babu ANILBARAN RAY:** Will the Hon'ble the Member in charge of the Political Department be pleased to state

(i) whether it is a fact that after the arrest of Babu Krishna Kumar Mitra and the late Babu Aswini Kumar Datta under Regulation III of 1818, the public were given to understand by Government that the case against them was that they had taken part in a revolutionary conspiracy; and

(ii) whether the Government of Bengal are prepared to give any guarantee beyond their verbal assurance that Regulation III of 1818 is not being applied to persons engaged in peaceful and legitimate activities in Bengal?

MEMBER in charge of POLITICAL DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Sir Hugh Stephenson): (i) No; *vide* the speech of His Excellency the Viceroy in the Legislative Council on 26th February, 1919, an extract of which is given below:—

Extract from the Gazette of India, dated the 26th February, 1919.

His Excellency the President said:

* * * * *

"In accordance with this view the Government of India have decided to obliterate, as far as they have it in their power to obliterate, the sore feeling caused by the action which has been forced upon them by past emergencies. We have determined to release the State prisoners

who were deported, under Regulation III of 1818, fourteen months ago. Our justification for their release is based upon the belief that the political position has entirely changed, that the political movement of which they were the leaders—seditious as it was—has degenerated into an anarchical plot, which can no longer be legitimately included as part of the political agitation in which they were so culpably implicated. We believe that we are no longer confronted by a political movement such as they inaugurated, but are face to face with an anarchical conspiracy waging war against British and Indian communities alike, and that it will be long before we can exterminate the evil unless those communities agree to work together hand in hand. We believe that their mutual efforts will be greatly encouraged by the release of the deportees as showing that Government is willing to trust the influential classes of the people and to rely upon their co-operation and loyalty.

"But though we have come to this decision, we cannot for an instant disregard the probability of further attempts at outrages, and that probability we are determined to combat with all the weapons at our disposal."

(ii) The question is not understood.

Treatment of prisoners according to their rank and station in life.

28. Babu ANILBARAN RAY: Will the Hon'ble the Member in charge of the Political Department be pleased to state—

(i) whether in the treatment of prisoners under Regulation III of 1818 the principle laid down in the Regulation that they are to be treated according to their rank and station in life has been given effect to by the Government;

(ii) whether the members of the Bengal Legislative Council now in detention under Regulation III of 1818 have received any preferential treatment in accordance with that principle;

(iii) whether it is not a fact that the petition of State prisoner Mr. S. C. Bose for special clothing in accordance with his rank and station in life has been rejected by the Government;

(iv) the names of persons, if any, who are receiving preferential treatment in accordance with the principle mentioned in clause (i); and

(v) what privileges in the matter of clothing, diet, etc., are being given to them beyond the ordinary scale?

The Hon'ble Sir HUGH STEPHENSON: (i) Yes.

(ii) There are no members of the Legislative Council now in detention under Regulation III of 1818.

(*iii*) A petition for clothing better than that supplied to him was rejected after inquiry.

(*iv*) Does not arise.

(*v*) Does not arise.

Charges against State and Ordinance prisoners.

29. **Babu ANILBARAN RAY:** Will the Hon'ble the Member in charge of the Political Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) why prisoners under Regulation III of 1818 and the new Ordinance have not been furnished with copies of the charges preferred against them;

(*ii*) whether it is not a fact that the charges framed are of such a nature that no other answer to them is possible except a direct "yes" or "no"; and

(*iii*) whether the replies from the prisoners have been considered by the two Judges?

(*b*) Are the Government considering the desirability of laying on the table the charges preferred, together with the replies received from the prisoners?

The Hon'ble Sir HUGH STEPHENSON: (*a*) (*i*) The charges are put to the détenus in order to inform them of the nature of the allegations made against them and to give them an opportunity of making any reply they think fit. This purpose is served by reading the charges over to them, and there is no necessity to give them copies.

(*ii*) No.

(*iii*) Yes.

(*b*) No.

Method of referring to State prisoners.

30. **Babu ANILBARAN RAY:** Will the Hon'ble the Member in charge of the Political Department be pleased to state why, in Government orders and circulars, State prisoners are referred to without any title (Mr. or Babu), no matter what their rank and station in life may be?

The Hon'ble Sir HUGH STEPHENSON: Because it is customary to do so.

Superintendent of Hooghly Jail.

31. **Babu ANILBARAN RAY:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble the Member in charge of the Department of Revenue (Jails) be pleased to state

whether it is a fact that Colonel Thurston, Superintendent of the Hooghly Jail,—

(i) has systematically ill-treated the Ordinance prisoners in that jail; and

(ii) has used insulting and abusive language towards them?

(b) If so, will the Hon'ble the Member be pleased to state what steps, if any, are proposed to be taken in the matter?

MEMBER in charge of DEPARTMENT of REVENUE [JAILS] (the Hon'ble Sir Hugh Stephenson): (a) No, it is not a fact.

(b) The question does not arise.

Babu BORODA PROSAD DEY: Is it not a fact that some cases were instituted with regard to this matter?

The Hon'ble Sir HUGH STEPHENSON: If the hon'ble member will give me the names of the persons who instituted these cases, I will have inquiries made.

State and Ordinance prisoners.

32. Mr. KIRAN SANKAR ROY: (a) Will the Hon'ble the Member in charge of the Political Department be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing -

(i) the names of those who are being detained under Regulation III and the Bengal Ordinance;

(ii) the places of internment of those who are interned outside the jails;

(iii) the names of those who are receiving allowances from the Government; and

(iv) the amount of allowances received by each?

(b) Will the Hon'ble the Member be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing—

(i) the names of those who are being detained in jails outside Bengal;

(ii) the reasons for transferring them from Bengal jails?

The Hon'ble Sir HUGH STEPHENSON: (a) (i) A statement is laid on the Library table.

(ii) Government are not prepared to give this information.

(iii) The names are as in the statement referred to in (i) above.

(iv) Government are not prepared to give this information.

(b) (i) and (ii) Government are not prepared to give this information.

Budget of the Government of Bengal for 1925-26.

General Discussion.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I fix the limit of 15 minutes for each non-official speaker.

Maulvi Md. NURUL HUQ CHAUDHURY: Sir, this year we have been presented with a Budget in which a sum of Rs. 63 lakhs has been provided for payment to the Imperial Exchequer. This contribution, which was not paid for the last 3 years, will have to be paid this year, if the Government of India do not come to the rescue of Bengal. Only about 6 or 7 days back, whilst speaking on the President's salary, I said that the revenue of Bengal is diminishing, but the expenditure is increasing; and the Hon'ble the Finance Member gave us a lucid account of the income and expenditure of Bengal, in which he gave us to understand that a good deal of money would be spent on transferred departments this year. Not being an accountant myself, and not knowing the technicalities of the Budget, I find that out of a total income of 11 crores and odd, a sum of 8 crores and odd is going to be spent on the reserved side of Government, and a paltry sum, merely 3 crores is to be spent on the so-called nation-building departments; and with a great flourish of trumpets, the Hon'ble the Finance Member has said that the Education Department is the biggest spending department on the transferred side. Sir, if you take the statistics, you will find education, according to the estimate of the Hon'ble the Finance Member, comes third best. The first department that comes on the revenue is the Police Department, with a sum of Rs. 1,93,00,000, that is, nearly 20 per cent. of the revenue of Bengal. Then comes the General Administration and after that the Education Department. A proposal is now before the Government, and is being seriously considered through its constituted advisers, that this year there ought to be 4 Ministers instead of 2 or 3, who will spend about 3 crores, whereas we have 4 Hon'ble Members, who are to spend 9 crores. Taking the ratio in that way, it seems to me that the poor rate-payers of Bengal would be safer if there was one Minister instead of four, or no Minister at all.

I can quite understand my friend, the Hon'ble Sir Hugh Stephenson in whose charge the great and the most important department is, that is the Police. He has to look to the peace and order of the country and, therefore, a large share of the country's money must go for the preservation of peace and order. But, Sir, what is this peace and order? May we ask the Hon'ble Member to tell us what this peace and order is? I will give you an example of a case in which this peace and order has been truthfully exemplified. The other day, two of the most Hon'ble Judges of the High Court acquitted a man of murder, I mean Mr. Premananda Dutt; as soon, however, as he came out of the jail,

the Government of Bengal in advance issued a warrant for his arrest under the Bengal Ordinance Act and he was arrested. Indeed, this is law and order, and with a vengeance, too! What respect do we find paid to the decision of the two most Hon'ble Judges of the High Court who refused to entertain the dying declaration of the murdered Sub-Inspector —

Mr. F. E. JAMES: On a point of order, Sir, may I know what this has to do with the discussion of the Budget?

Mr. PRESIDENT: A general discussion of the Budget ranges as a rule over an enormous variety of subjects, and it is very difficult for the President to say what is relevant and what is not.

Dr. KUMUD SANKAR RAY: May I ask under what head of the Budget the point raised by the member comes in?

Mr. PRESIDENT: I imagine that he can bring it under the head of Judicial Establishment. However, we have heard enough about this. We had better pass on to something else.

Maulvi Md. NURUL HUQ CHAUDHURY: I was given to understand, and I think I am right that the members of the Council whatever speeches they deliver in the Council, are immune from prosecution, and when they enter the Council Chamber, they are immune from arrest, but I always find the members of the Criminal Investigation Department dogging our footsteps and even coming into the lobby.

Mr. PRESIDENT: That question does not arise. You can say they are over-paid, but I do not think you can say anything else.

Maulvi Md. NURUL HUQ CHAUDHURY: I say this because they often come into the lobby and peep into the Chamber. Last year there was a provision for Secret Service money amounting to Rs. 75,000, and year before last the amount was Rs. 50,000. But this year we find that they have budgetted for a lakh of rupees on this account, and the reason given by the Hon'ble Member was that the Criminal Investigation Department officers had to travel a lot more and more money is necessary for that department. The Criminal Law Amendment Act has been certified and there are provisions in it that a man who cannot be found to give evidence on behalf of prosecution or is not easily available whatever he stated previously would be legal evidence against accused persons and in order to support and corroborate these evidences witnesses shall have to be procured by hook or by crook. When no satisfactory explanation comes forward, how secret service money is spent, then I take it that is utilised and will be utilised for the purpose of giving bribes to witnesses to come forward and give evidence——

Mr. PRESIDENT: You should not bring a charge of that kind unless you are prepared to substantiate it.

Maulvi Md. NURUL HUQ CHAUDHURY: I understand that this money would be utilised for the purpose of procuring witnesses.

The Hon'ble Sir HUGH STEPHENSON: May I point out that this understanding is quite wrong?

Mr. PRESIDENT: That is very probably the case. I must ask the member not to accuse Government of bribing witnesses.

Maulvi Md. NURUL HUQ CHAUDHURY: I think the members of this Council are entitled to know how the money is going to be spent and how it was spent last year.

Sir, in the Education Department's Budget we find that about Rs. 4,82,000 would be spent for a Muhammadan College. Out of that, one lakh was granted last year, but the probable expenditure would be Rs. 1,10,000. Properly speaking, that ought to be shown in the Public Works Department Budget, but the amount of stipends or scholarships has not been increased as it ought to have been. The Education Department is one of the spending departments on the transferred side and education, according to us, whether Hindus or Muhammadans, should be imparted to everyone, without distinction, whether rich or poor. The amount provided for education is not quite enough for that education which we want, I mean primary education. Government is in honour bound to give education to everyone of its subjects, and up to now, Government have not given that amount of attention to the subject that they ought to have given. If more money could be found for police expenditure, police buildings, for appointment of an extra Minister, for payment of extra money to the members of the Services, and also for espionage and other matters, I do not understand why education should not receive much more or twice that amount which has been budgetted for.

The Hon'ble the Finance Member said that Government are trying a scheme drawn up by Mr. C. R. Das last year, and a sum of Rs. 1,25,000 has been provided for village organisation. Is it enough for the whole of Bengal? The Hon'ble Member said that this amount may not be spent during the whole year and the scheme being in an experimental stage, it may be necessary to spend more money. Indeed, Government moves very slowly. I think the money which Mr. Das asked, if it is put in the hands of my leader, may be all spent within the year and he will ask for more, or perhaps double the amount during the next year not to speak of spending this paltry sum.

Now, I come to Excise. In the Excise Department the revenue is every day increasing, and this revenue we are getting at the expense of the people who have taken to drug habits. I do not mind if my

European friends want to take a certain quantity of beverage every day to which they are accustomed, but to the poor people of India who are not accustomed to these habits, these drugs should not be made easily available to them. I know there are a certain class of people in Bengal who cannot do without *pachwai* or home-made beer, but the Government takes a tax from them for this, and the Government says "become as drunk as you like, but pay us our tax," so that the money that we will get out of you will be spent for carrying on the administration and to keep law and order. Secondly, everyone is trying to put down the opium-eating habit.

(At this stage the member having reached the time-limit was allowed two minutes more to conclude his speech.)

In Geneva the Chinese people want that no more opium should be sent out of India, but we find that under opium our revenue is every day increasing, and this year the Hon'ble the Finance Member will have about Rs. 17 lakhs increased income from opium itself. I say that this is blood-money which we ought not to take out of the people, and it should immediately be put a stop to.

Dr. H. W. B. MORENO: The Budget as presented by the Hon'ble the Finance Member reminds one of the story of the Irishman's blanket. When he lay down and covered himself with it, he found his toes were woefully exposed to the cold. To remedy this he clipped off a piece from the top of the blanket and stitched it on to the lower end in order that his toes might remain warm in future. I think the Hon'ble Member in charge of the Budget has clipped off a good deal here and a good deal there, adding those portions to other departments with the result that no one seems entirely satisfied.

The great question that hangs over the Budget is that of the Meston Award of 63 lakhs to the Imperial Exchequer, which dangles like the sword of Damocles over the head of Bengal. I think, although representations have been made to the Government of India, a final representation should be made once more for the permanent remission of that amount. There is a very good case for the Province of Bengal. Bengal pays by way of revenue to the Imperial Exchequer far more than the other provinces do. In the Punjab where irrigation is carried out largely at the expense of the Government of India, the revenue has considerably increased. Formerly the income of the Punjab was only 18 lakhs; after irrigation introduced by the Government of India, the income rose in 1919-1920 to 136 lakhs. Bengal has had no such irrigation schemes carried out by the Government of India. Yet its income compares very favourably with that of the other provinces, which also contribute to the Imperial Exchequer.

Further the export duty on jute is, I understand, over 2 crores and 38 lakhs and the export duties on tea and on cotton goods are also very large, all going to swell the revenues of the Imperial

Exchequer. In 1919-20—I am sorry I have given later figures—Bengal had by export duty on tea paid out 48½ lakhs, on rice 9 lakhs. The export duty altogether from Bengal was 2 crores and 88½ lakhs. In Madras it was 6 crores and 75 lakhs, in Bombay 10 crores and in Burma 45 lakhs.

Then with regard to Income Tax and Super Tax which are Imperial revenues, Bengal compares very favourably, with other provinces. I hold, therefore, that a final and determined representation should be made to the Government of India basing our arguments on the logic of facts, in order that something should be done for the permanent remission of this contribution laid down by the Meston Award towards the Imperial Exchequer.

With regard to the Police, I notice that this year we have to provide for proprietory buildings instead of having the police housed in rented buildings. The Police, somehow or other, always comes up in the Budget like King Charles' head, mentioned in one of Dickens's novels, where the character could not carry on any conversation without bringing it in. Last year we had to discuss mosquito-nets for the Police and this year we are discussing roofs and walls for them to dwell in. We are reminded thereby that the Police like the poor are always with us.

Speaking as a representative of the Anglo-Indian community, I should like to express my gratitude to the Government for restoring Rs. 99,000 which were cut out from last year's Budget under a set of sad circumstances to which I do not wish to refer here. Sir, the Anglo-Indian community is suffering very sorely for the want of proper education and most of the schools where the young are having their education require every pie of the grants made to them. It is very satisfactory to see the grants being restored. I also notice with a sense of gratitude that the grant to the Kalimpong Homes to which a larger number of Anglo-Indian children go for their education has been raised from Rs. 46,000 to Rs. 56,000. The Entally Orphanage not very far from this Council Chamber—has also been given a grant of Rs. 61,000 which I gratefully acknowledge, on behalf of my community for new buildings. The Entally Orphanage is very badly housed and the present accommodation is too scanty to admit even of a slightly enhanced number of orphans. The result is that some of the poor orphans have to sleep under the beds of others for want of proper sleeping accommodation. This grant will do a great deal of good to the institution.

Speaking personally, I also acknowledge with gratitude the grant of Rs. 59,000 made to the Church Missionary Society's High School at Garden Reach. It is an institution which has done a great deal of good for several communities in that portion of Calcutta. Speaking as the head of the institute at one time, I express my gratitude

for the giving of this grant which will go towards the erection of a building for an institution which has been serving a very useful purpose.

I notice that in the Industries Department very little has been given by way of real help. After all, the great Nation-Building Departments are mainly agricultural and industrial. If the people are to advance they must advance along the lines of agriculture and industry. In agriculture very little has been done by the Government and in industries less. We were to have technical school in Calcutta but it has not yet been started. I would suggest that chemico-technological institutions be started for the study of the analyses of foodstuffs, oils and manures and for training up students to start industrial enterprises. We have seen recently that the indigenous oil known as *chalmugra* and other such oils have been used largely in the cure of leprosy. Other indigenous drugs may with advantage be analysed and tested if such an institution were started; thus opening the way for industries, which in their turn will go to solve the great question of unemployment.

With regard to the Calcutta University I note that Rs. 2,00,000 have been earmarked for that institution in order to balance its expenditure with its income. The Calcutta University is serving a very useful purpose and I am glad that Government has now seen fit to come forward to help it. In this connection I should like the Government to urge on the University the necessity of paying more attention to vocational education. We are becoming more than tired of this mad pursuit of a mere form of literary education and I trust that something will be done in this direction in the near future, as there is so much growing unemployment among the middle-classes, especially among Anglo-Indians. Here I would especially urge upon the Government the need of an Anglo-Indian hostel to be attached to Calcutta University such as for the other communities. The Anglo-Indian community is taking more and more to higher education University education and I would plead for some sort of hostel accommodation to attract aspiring members of the community, where students may well be housed while continuing their higher studies. In Dacca, I understand, a start has already been made in that direction; and I think a beginning should also be made here as well, for several of our boys are, as I have already said, taking to the University course of studies, notably St. Joseph's High School at Bow Bazar, which has already started University courses; if we have such hostel accommodation, I am sure, students will be attracted to the University in larger numbers.

For primary education, I notice that Government is giving only a lakh for the Punchayati Union Board schools. After all it seems to me that Government should give out more liberally towards primary education leading on to the ideal of universal free primary education.

In this connection I notice one thing and that is the haphazard manner in which these grants for education are being doled out—and indeed all grants for the Transferred Departments. I hope that when Ministers are appointed they will lay down a definite policy for the transferred subjects which may be carried out in a sympathetic manner even by their successors. At present what happens is this: A hue and a cry is made for a particular thing and it is given. There is no definite and well-cut programme made out by those in charge of the Transferred Departments. I, therefore, hope that a more definite and clear-cut programme will be laid down by the Ministers about to assume office, whose successors would be helped to carry out the unfinished part of the programme laid down by their predecessors. The present haphazard manner of meeting the needs of the Province cannot but lead to deplorable loss, by the endless starting once more of schemes but half accomplished.

With regard to medical schools, I notice that we have a school in Calcutta, one at Dacca, one at Mymensingh and so forth. We ought to have a well-equipped school at Howrah which is a very populous centre. I would suggest that Government should meet the needs of the people of that locality and consider a scheme for starting a medical school there, which would encourage the prominent citizens there to carry on to fruition.

Sir, I would also draw attention to another important subject. I allude to the cattle in the Province; very little is being done in that direction. It is to the cattle of India that people must look for the future welfare of India. Here in India the cattle draw our burdens; they plough our fields; they also give us milk for the upkeep of our children and milk products for the sustenance of our adults. Therefore, it is to the cattle of India that the people have to look for their future welfare and I hope that something comprehensive will be done in this connection. We have at Rangpur a Government farm for improving the breed of cows and bullocks; and I hope that beyond this more comprehensive measures will be taken up for the improvement of the cattle, which in its turn will lead to the prosperity of the masses.

Finally, I should like to plead in the name of my community for some adequate grants for the formation of a home of industries in which Anglo-Indians could profitably be employed instead of their being compelled to receive doles by way of charity. We, Sir, as Anglo-Indians form a minority community which is by no means affluent; and we do look and pray to those that are more generously situated to give us that help which chivalry alone can give. I earnestly hope that when the Budget grants will be discussed in this Council those grants which are earmarked for the Anglo-Indian community will receive that chivalrous and generous response from those communities who are more

fortunately situated, which it can rightfully expect by virtue of the high ties of kinship and common interest.

Babu JOGINDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTI: I do not know whether I can profitably take up the time of the Council by making a speech on the Budget presented by the Hon'ble Mr. Donald. Sir, the object of allowing a discussion on the Budget is not merely to elicit the views of the members of the Council as to how the two sides of the Budget may be balanced but also to enable them to have their say on the policy underlying the collection of revenue and the proposed expenditure under various heads. Sir, when one is reminded of the fact that Budget speeches are more or less of an academic nature and fail to serve the purpose with which they are delivered the feeling becomes irresistible that they are delivered entirely in vain. But the ceremonial function must be gone through and the days allotted for the purpose must be spent by unburdening ourselves of the thoughts that may be rankling in our hearts for an outward expression. Sir, the Reforms were inaugurated with great pomp and ceremony, and we were asked to believe that our administrators had changed their angle of vision and that India was really put into the path of progressive realization of Swaraj which is the aim of her aspirations. Fully four years have rolled by and if one turns his eyes back to what has happened within these four years, I believe I shall not be accused of using the language of exaggeration when I say that even the boldest optimist will not venture to claim that India has really gained even by a hair's breadth her right to shape her own destinies. Year after year the elected representatives offer their criticisms on the policy of the administration urging demands which they consider important for securing the health and happiness of the people but their demands are invariably thrown into the cold shade of neglect. Turning to the Budget now under discussion we find the same policy of distribution of doles for the bare subsistence of the nation-preserving departments from what is left after making adequate and handsome provisions for those whose claims form the first charge upon the finances of the country. A perusal of the speech delivered by the Hon'ble Member in charge of Finance leaves in my mind the impression of a man in dire distress, struggling to make both ends meet but always apprehending that his expenditure may fall short of his income but for some favourable circumstances which he ardently wishes to happen. I heartily sympathise with my Hon'ble Friend in his difficulties. His Budget is an adversity Budget. The Hon'ble Member tells us that our ordinary expenditure to carry on the administration represents an excess of 33 lakhs over our income—in other words, by the payment of our provincial contribution, the Budget is a deficit one to the extent of 33 lakhs. We have been told that since the year the reformed constitution came into being, the Budget has been a deficit Budget all

through. Attempts have been made to retrench expenditure in various ways and to increase the revenue by additional taxation, but the net result of all activities in these directions comes to this that without making any provision for new works, the expenditure falls short of the income merely by providing for carrying on the administration. The provision for increments of salaries, as a consequence of the decision of the Lee Commission Report, is partly responsible for the deficit according to the Hon'ble Mr. Donald. The debate on that report in the Legislative Assembly will fully disclose what the country thinks about the recommendations made therein. To-day we are face to face with the actualities of the situation. There is no money available to save the country from the ravages caused by malaria, epidemic diseases, want of good drinking water, flood and famine, but money must be provided to add to the comforts of those who are more than amply provided for. Sir, is it surprising that the average Indian who desires to live should be inclined to regard with suspicion the professions of sympathy and affection for the people of India on the part of those whose actions often belie their promises? Surely, Sir, all love for the Reforms at once evaporates when we find that the immediate result of the Reforms has been an increase in taxation, in various shapes, with a chronic want of money whenever money is wanted by the people just to enable them to keep their bodies and souls together, but not when it is required to add to the luxuries of those who belong to the services which are the most highly paid services in the world. Sir, I have the honour to represent a district in far off North Bengal and I am inclined therefore to offer a few remarks upon the general policy of the administration affecting the welfare of the people living in the mufassal. My district (Dinajpur) has the unenviable reputation of heading the list of places notorious for an unhealthy climate, particularly due to malaria. In illiteracy and poverty my district has probably very few parallels in Bengal. In the matter of industries we read in authentic records that we had a lot of them in the early years of British rule but they have now become things of the past. Villages, which were at one time full of men and women who had food to eat and water to drink and who used to enjoy health and happiness, are now practically depopulated, full of jungles and marshes, converted into a happy play-ground of wild animals and hot beds of innumerable diseases. Sir, the picture delineated by me is surely not an overdrawn picture and represents, I believe, the normal condition of a Bengal village. Whenever occasions arise for referring to these conditions of village life, particularly on the occasions of visits to district towns by the Head of the Province, the invariable reply that is received is that they are matters relating to the transferred departments for which the Ministers are responsible. It is difficult for an ordinary intellect to appreciate the reasonableness of an arrangement by virtue of which the departments of education and public health

are made over to the transferred half of the administration with no purse sufficient to carry on that administration. Some of the most capable men, whose patriotism and ardent love of the motherland are beyond question, acted as Ministers during the first three years of the Reformed Constitution, but in spite of their best efforts they could do nothing to justify their existence. Sir, the people of this country have been awakened to a consciousness of their legitimate right to live and grow as a nation. They can no longer be expected to remain content with mere phantoms. They demand that the country must be administered with an eye to their own needs first and to the needs of others next.

There is another matter to which I desire to refer in connection with the policy of the present administration. It will not, I venture to say, come as a surprise to many of my friends in this House when I say that the whole framework of the administration rests upon a very weak foundation. It is a matter of common knowledge that the great majority of men in subordinate posts in almost all the departments of the Government are in the habit of receiving illegal gratification from persons who happen to come in contact with them in connection with any work which they may have in a Government office. In the case of the Bengal Police their reputation of honesty and conscientious discharge of their duties is very far from what is desirable. Sir, it is no answer to say that this state of things is due to the innate moral weakness of the men themselves. On the contrary, I think it is the policy of the administration that is responsible for such exhibitions of moral weakness on the part of those who are at the bottom of the administrative machinery. I consider it entirely a wrong principle to employ men on inadequate pay and place them in positions where they can easily exercise their influence either for or against the interests of the public, and where they are constantly under temptations of various kinds. Take for example the case of the sub-inspectors of police. A *daroga* placed in charge of a thana is the *ma bap* of the men residing within his jurisdiction yet the pay of a *daroga* ranges from Rs. 80 to Rs. 130 per month, less than the pay of a Sergeant who draws a pay of Rs. 135 to Rs. 175. In the Police Department under the head "District Executive Force" there is provision for 36 superintendents, 50 assistant superintendents and 25 deputy superintendents with a salary of Rs. 7,99,000, while 1,677 sub-inspectors are to get Rs. 18,18,000. The pay of an assistant sub-inspector is only Rs. 25 to Rs. 35 per month, and 2,328 assistant sub-inspectors and head constables are allowed Rs. 8,49,000. The pay of a police superintendent is Rs. 750 to Rs. 1,600. Sir, the principle of placing a few highly paid officers at the top who carry away a large portion of the revenue and then leave the real work of the department to be done by individuals who cannot obviously be expected to serve honestly on the pay given to them, carries with it an implied

sanction that these men should maintain themselves as best as they can at the expense of those who happens to come in contact with them. The same principle is followed in other departments. There are some highly placed officers at the top while those who are at the bottom and have to do the spade work of the department are paid such salaries which our administrators are fully aware cannot be considered to be sufficient for an ordinary Bengalee *bhadralok* to maintain himself properly. Sir, we hear a good deal about retrenchment, and committees to devise retrenchments in expenditure. May I say without meaning any offence to any body that no effective retrenchment can be possible until those who hold the steering wheel of the administrative car are prepared to work on a reasonable scale of pay. But the misfortune of the whole situation is that what is reasonable is not to be judged by those who have to pay but is left to be settled by those who are to draw. The inevitable result is that attempts to secure economy by reducing a clerk here or a chaprasi there must always end in nothing and the complaint made by the Finance Member that he cannot make the two ends meet becomes chronic.

Sir, with regard to the transferred departments, the Hon'ble Mr. Donald has been pleased to tell us that the provision for rural water-supply has been increased from Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 2½ lakhs in the coming year. But, Sir, when we bear in mind that the Police Budget is about 3 lakhs in excess of the revised estimate of the current year and the General Administration Budget is 6¼ lakhs over that of the revised estimate, the increase mentioned by the Hon'ble Member does not seem to indicate that the Government is really very keen about the real needs of the people. We have been told by him that the Government may claim credit that Government have been attending to the needs of the transferred departments. The Hon'ble Member does not certainly claim that Government have done all that the people could expect the Government to do. He wished that more could have been done but the financial condition would not permit him to proceed further. It is hardly necessary for me to state that the explanation is but an echo of the ordinary reply that the needs of the reserved departments must be met first and the demands for the nation-building departments come next. Speaking on the transferred departments I desire to draw the prominent attention of the Council, to the recent increase in the rates of tuition fees in the Government schools. The increase in each of the first four classes is generally from one rupee to eight annas and in the other classes from eight annas to four annas. There has been an increase in charges for boarders in hostels attached to Government schools. I fail to appreciate the policy behind this universal increase in school fees and boarding charges. The cost of education is already very heavy and an ordinary middle class man who has to educate 3 or 4 children finds it often impossible to meet their educational expenses. The burden is enormously increased now

and it is needless to add that it will seriously affect the education of the average Bengalee boy. To my mind the increase in fees, is capable of one explanation, *viz.*, that the Government is following a policy of non-co-operation with the people with a view to obstruct the education of our boys so far as possible.

With regard to the Public Health Department, I have often asked myself the question as to how the sanitary conditions of the country can automatically improve if money is spent lavishly by paying big salaries to certain officers with high sounding names. The Hon'ble Mr. Donald tells us that he has provided Rs. 1,25,000 for Public Health organisations. The question really is how diseases can be prevented. We have heard a good deal about anti-malarial schemes, anti-kala-azar schemes and so on but the pity of the whole thing is that——

[At this stage the member reached the time-limit.]

Mr. PRESIDENT: Have you nearly concluded your speech?

Babu JOGINDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTI: I shall finish, Sir, within two minutes more.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Very well.

Babu JOGINDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTI: Sir, I cannot conclude without offering a few remarks upon the temper of the Government at the present moment. The greatest misfortune that affects the nation as a whole takes place when those who are responsible for the destinies of the nation are led away to have recourse to drastic measures on the plea of law and order against those who take a prominent part in activities intended to bring about a healthy change in the administration. I do not question for a moment that the primary duty of every Government is to punish those who are guilty of committing violence against law and order. But when the Government loses confidence in the courts of law whose primary function is to administer the law upon judicial evidence and takes upon itself the functions of the prosecutor and the judge the condition of things becomes extremely serious. The recent certification of the Criminal Law Amendment Act is an exhibition of this temper and the incarceration without trial of persons who enjoy the highest regard and affections of the people is a result of the action taken under this extraordinary measure. May I remind the Government that there can be no progress, no prosperity, no happiness in a country where the people have to live constantly under a fear of insecurity in respect of their own personal liberties. Let us yet hope that good sense will eventually prevail in the counsels of the Government.

Babu BEJOY KRISHNA BOSE: Sir, in the dull, prosaic, and academic discussion that will now be in progress, when the flood gates of oratory will be laid open and hon'ble members will vie with each other in showing that they have got an insight of the Budget presented last week, I have no heart to take a prominent part. I have carefully gone through the Budget estimates and have read the speech delivered by the Hon'ble Mr. Donald and other Hon'ble Members of Government and I do not find much upon which I can congratulate them for their production. It is a deficit Budget. Somehow or other revenues have been found to carry on the every day administration and some touches have been given here and there to show that the Government is not unmindful to the interests of the people entrusted to their charge.

I attempted again this year to find out what is the policy behind the Budget, what attempts have been made to alleviate the distress of the people, what provisions have been made to bring relief to the distressed —in a word what is the guiding principle running through the whole of it. When I come to the passage in the Hon'ble Mr. Donald's speech that there was a policy now in the Budget, I rubbed my eyes and opened them as wide as possible to find it out. The first policy I noticed is in his own words "normal expansion (of expenditure) due to increments of salaries, etc., partly as a consequence of the decision of the Lee Commission Report." The report has not yet been discussed in the Legislative Assembly and we do not know whether Government would accept it; yet provisions have been made in the Budget to give effect to their recommendations. Policy indeed--a policy of loot, of exploitation, of carrying into practice Lord Salisbury's dictum "India must be bled." This policy finds a place for the first time in this year's Budget in the increase of pay, emoluments, over-seas allowance, increase in the High Commissioner's Budget, etc., for the "steel frame" that must be maintained in every department of administration.

The second policy is that under the present circumstances the revenues cannot bear the burden of any loan to meet the demands of the so-called "Nation Building Departments," but a loan of 8½ lakhs for the present might very well be raised for better housing of the police. All other improvements might wait, but not this one, for upon it depends the maintenance of "law and order."

The next policy I find is "that there are other proposals for new expenditure amounting to 58½ lakhs." But mind, these are only "proposals"—provisional in their nature. If the 63 lakhs contribution are not remitted, Government will reconsider their position and the proposals will never materialise. So this policy of the Government of Bengal is contingent of fulfilment upon the mercy, the charity and the kindness of the Government of India. How are these expenses to be met? Will it not be by drawing upon the accumulation of balances? Are balances to be drawn upon in this way just to show

that the Government is not unmindful to the interests of the transferred departments? Ought we not to insist upon these balances to be kept as a sacred trust for the development of the "Nation Building Departments" for which no scheme has yet been made? But before looking to some of the items of expenditure covering this 58½ lakhs, let us look to the provisions for which credit is taken that the Government is not unmindful of the interests of the people.

(*1*) As arising out of the suggestion in Mr. C. R. Das's speech last year, the sum of 1¼ lakhs have been provided for subsidising the district boards for the creation of health organisations. Indeed Mr. C. R. Das must feel supremely happy that his scheme involving an expenditure of 5 crores has thus been taken up by a kind and benevolent Government which has introduced the thin wedge of Reform in the serried phalanx of figures covering the whole Budget. As a member of the district board of 24-Parganas, I take credit in the fact that we matured our scheme for combating malaria, kala-azar, etc., independent of the Government and while providing 50 thousands of rupees this year for the said purposes we have made provisions for another lakh in our Budget for next year. When we launched this scheme we unanimously resolved that this expenditure of ours will be contingent upon Government helping us with a lakh of rupees. A deputation from our Board waited upon His Excellency the Governor and the members understood that 50 thousand rupees would be given to our Board. But instead I find that it is the intention to pay us only 25 thousand and the remainder 75 thousand is, therefore, reserved for subsidising all other district boards in the Province! Splendid, for which credit is taken! But while scrutinising the figures with regard to public health we find it is admitted that the "total Budget grant is less than that of the current year" on this head. The reason given is that the municipalities are not ready with their schemes. The result is that while last year a provision was made of 8 lakhs on this head, now the amount is only 2½ lakhs! The total of expenses in connection with epidemic diseases, malaria, kala-azar, plague, etc., is less by 66 thousand rupees from the Budget figures of the current year. The grant for public health purposes is less by 2 lakhs 58 thousand rupees from the Budget estimates of the current year. With this provision of diminished expenditure on a subject most vital to the people of this Province, how can credit be taken for providing 1¼ lakhs for creation of public health organisations, is a thing incomprehensible to me. You take away with the right hand what you gracefully give by your left.

(*2*) A sum of Rs. 83,000 is provided for appointment of circle officers for furtherance of village self-government. This is a gift of doubtful utility which the majority of the people of the Province have failed to appreciate. Volumes of books have been written by European and Indian authors of high repute how a long system of foreign administration had killed our village organisations, its civilisation and culture.

This is not the place for me to dwell on this subject. But the fact is too well known that the influence of local magistrates are brought to bear upon the people for starting union boards by crippling the resources of the local and district boards, so that in almost every village the direct influence of Deputy and Sub-Deputy Collectors in the shape of circle officers might be brought to bear upon the conduct of public affairs by the people themselves. However much we may sing the praise of these union boards the people do not take kindly to them and your efforts will be like administering quinine into the system of young people by making them to gulp it down their throats.

(3) In the Education Budget credit is taken for an excess provision of 7 lakhs for the next year. The whole system upon which these provisions have been made, in this department, requires a thorough overhauling so that there may be a policy behind it. Without raising communal question, I must say that the amount budgetted for on the reserve side of education is out of all proportion to the amount that has been provided for on its transferred side, regard being had to the number of students in them, the high scale of pay of masters and mistresses in Government schools comparing the same with the poor pay of teachers in the Indian schools. The cost of Inspectorate is too high and quite unnecessary, whereas one of the methods by which relief may be given to the poor Indian teachers is to start teachers' provident funds and make suitable contribution to them. But that policy finds no favour with the Government.

While thankful to Government for providing 2 lakhs more by way of recurring grant to the Calcutta University, I must say that the amount is inadequate. It is no use comparing the amount with that of the similar grant to the Dacca University. I only hope that a supplementary grant be given to the Calcutta University while its needs are fully ascertained. I am also not unmindful to the increased grant to non-Government secondary schools and primary schools but the sum is a mere drop in the ocean and the increase should have been much larger.

While on the subject of education I cannot but refer with certain amount of uneasiness to the question of Secondary and Intermediate Board. The public is quite in the dark as to the intentions of the Government on that subject, while rumours are thick with all manner of ominous reports. As a representative of the Calcutta University constituency I ought to know something about it. But my crime is, I hold Swarajist view and so could not safely be taken into confidence. The Calcutta University is vitally interested in this scheme and the grants to-day should depend upon the intentions of the Government with regard to the creation or otherwise of that Board.

The whole of the amount of 3 lakhs 92 thousand for guru-training schools is a huge waste. The amount of 12 lakhs 16 thousand for

inspection should be curtailed to half. The Government was impervious to all criticisms and did not take heed of the feeling of the country about it. We know what kind of inspection they make and how they make it. Half of this 12 lakhs 16 thousand ought to go as a contribution to the provident fund in aid of Indian teachers and the whole amount of nearly 4 lakhs for guru-training ought to be devoted to starting more scholarships for poor boys. The education on European lines has become so costly that we have to pay to the High Commissioner in England for distribution to the members of the Education Service enjoying holidays in England a sum of one lakh 25 thousands as leave allowances and 61 thousands in the shape of overseas pay.

(4) Then comes the grant of 2½ lakhs for rural water-supply in the place of 50,000 rupees for the expiring year. If the Government think that thereby they solve the millionth part of the trouble of the people on this subject they are greatly mistaken. In the district board of 24-Parganas we had allotted and spent nearly 25 thousand rupees in the current year in sinking tube wells, but we have not brought any appreciable relief to the people in the mufassal. How ridiculously low this figure of 2½ lakhs will be seen by comparing it with some of the items of expenditure in the construction of Civil Works provided for in the Budget. I would give to the House only a few of them:—

	Rs.
(a) Resurfacing with tar macadam only 4 roads in the Calcutta maidan	2,87,000
(I do not know whether the Europeans would leave India unless these roads are tar macadamised.)	
(b) Nurses' quarters in the Presidency General Hospital ..	2,27,000
(c) Electric installation in Nurses' quarters in the Presidency General Hospital	41,000
(Enough to make a new building.)	
(d) Boundary wall with ornamental railings in the Medical College	23,000
(e) Construction of guru-training schools	92,000
(f) Calcutta Police buildings	16,72,000
(Out of which a loan of 8½ lakhs would be raised next year).	
(g) Barracks for 30 married constables—to enjoy domestic peace and felicity	40,000
(h) Expansion of the Asansol sub-jail	64 000
(i) For office of the Superintendent of Police in the Dacca Collectorate buildings	1,71,000
(j) Rearrangement in the Writers' Buildings	50,000
(Is it for the office of the fourth Minister in embryo.)	
(k) Alterations in Government Houses	50,000

[Here the member having reached the time-limit was allowed by the Hon'ble the President three minutes more to conclude his speech.]

I do not take into consideration a hundred other schemes some of which may be necessary, *e.g.*, housing of Munsifs in the mufassal, but many can wait till the pressing needs of the moment be first

provided for. All these provisions are made when the Hon'ble Mr. Donald exclaimed that "we are now in the *critical stage* in our financial career," and unless this 63 lakhs are remitted "we shall again be in a *desperate position*." It looks like a mockery with these and other items of expenses, credit is taken for a grant of only 2½ lakhs for water-supply to nearly 40 millions of people in the mufassal.

(5) Excise shows an increase of 17 lakhs in revenue. Lest you tremble as to what will become of this province when this demon of intoxication has been stalking abroad, the Hon'ble Member hastens to assure you that the real increase is only 5 lakhs, and the rest is the result of "improved administration" and "revised system of accounting." You are at the same time told that the consumption of country liquor, opium, etc., has greatly decreased. It is sufficient to swallow the bait—that while consumption is decreasing, income is increasing, all due to better administration and a new system of accounts. I leave the question there for purists and moralists to ponder and solve.

(6) It is absolutely useless to dilate upon the Police Budget. Any criticism, however mild, will increase official irritation. In 2 years from 1923-24 the expenses on police have increased by 8 lakhs 27 thousand 4 hundred and twenty, including the increased provision for 3 lakhs for the next year. Comment is superfluous. Loans can be undertaken only to meet the increase of happiness of members of this department, so that the people may be made unhappy, and not for any other department.

I cannot conclude, Sir, without repeating what I said last year that the 82 thousand rupees for the Band Establishment, and 1 lakh 11 thousand for the Bodyguard Establishment of His Excellency the Governor, are absolutely unnecessary and unsuited to the needs and needs of the time. The sum of Rs. 20,000 for the renewal of furniture and carpets are only a glittering symbol of splendour and majesty in the midst of a perishing people. The idea of increasing the number of Ministers to 4, instead of giving effect to the recommendation of the Retrenchment Committee for reducing the number of the Cabinet to a strength of 2 Executive Councillors and 2 Ministers only, is a sheer waste and a hollow mockery—calculated to lend enchantment to the view, where eight white, brown, black and semi-white bureaucrats will dazzle resplendent with the colours of variegated hue. If those who support dyarchy and help Government in appointing 4 Ministers have the courage to face their constituencies on that issue only they will find how mistaken they are. But 2 years more of tenure of office is only a brief moment in the history of Bengal and retribution will come as surely as I am speaking here to-night.

[At this stage the Council adjourned for 10 minutes.]

After the adjournment.

Sir PROVASH CHUNDER MITTER: Sir, I take part in this debate because I desire to offer two general criticisms of a constructive nature from the point of view of a co-operator and National Liberal; but before I do so I would like to touch upon one or two points of the Education Budget—a subject in which I naturally take much interest. I am glad to find provision for a grant of 3 lakhs for non-Government secondary schools and a grant of 3 lakhs to the Calcutta University. Although these sums are by no means sufficient yet I am happy to note that a beginning has been made. The problem of the pay and prospects of the teachers of secondary schools is not only an educational problem of the utmost importance, but it has also a political aspect which ought not to be ignored. From rough estimates that I made, when I was a Minister, I came to the conclusion that an increase of fifteen lakhs as grants to non-Government schools and a grant of over 2½ lakhs to the Calcutta University were necessary. The absorption of the fees from the Matriculation examination by the Calcutta University will prejudicially affect the secondary schools, but the Calcutta University, at the same time, cannot possibly set free these fees derived from the Matriculation examination unless a further grant of 2 lakhs be made to that University. A total grant of 4½ lakhs to the Calcutta University, the establishment of an independent body, whether as part of the University or outside it, for the administration of secondary education; and a grant of 15 lakhs for the improvement of the pay and prospects of about ten thousand teachers who are responsible for the education of about 2½ lakhs of our boys, are urgent educational necessities.

Now, Sir, I desire to touch upon two very important points of a general nature. I would first of all deal with the report of the Retrenchment Committee and the decision of the Government taken on that report. A paper in which the decision of the Government was printed and circulated to the members of this House a few days after the Ministers' salaries were rejected in August last. That paper, however, did not give us the totals of the retrenchments. I took the trouble to add them up and found that according to the recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee the total amount to be retrenched on the reserved departments including the services, contingencies, travelling allowances, etc., that is to say, in all departments of Government other than the purely transferred departments, came up to Rs. 98,25,900, while the total reduction effected by Government was Rs. 9,88,551 and the ultimate reductions according to Government decision would amount to only about Rs. 11½ lakhs. Now, Sir, I put to my friends opposite—is it fair to the body of co-operators who were members of the Retrenchment Committee—the Retrenchment Committee was presided over by Sir Rajendra Nath Mookerjee, a Prince of Co-operators, in his absence Sir Campbell Rhodes, a leader of the European community, and the President of the Chamber of Commerce, presided—with them were associated Mr. Spry, then Secretary of the Government, and Mr. Surendra Nath Mallik who

was a most useful member of this House, and who lost his public life because he was a co-operator. The fifth member was Rai Abinash Chandra Banerjee Bahadur who lost his public life because he was a co-operator. If the unanimous recommendations of a committee like this for the retrenchment to the extent of a crore of rupees be ignored—if 90 per cent. of their recommendations are not accepted, I put it to my friends—do you give the co-operators any chance in public life? We are willing to co-operate with you, but we insist that you must understand our position, you must look at our difficulties and problems from our point of view. If you do not do that, is it any wonder that those who are for non-co-operation will have the upper hand to-day? I put it to the House that for the loss of his seat by our esteemed leader Sir Surendra Nath Banarjea, for the loss of his seat by a prominent member of our party, Mr. S. N. Mallik, and also a number of other seats, this thoughtless action on the part of the Government is responsible. I hope and trust my friends opposite will not misunderstand me. Being a National Liberal and a co-operator I look forward to the future of India as an equal partner in the British Empire where the British and the Indian will have an equal voice and where they will proceed to work with amity and goodwill. That amity and goodwill will be impossible of attainment if you do not on your part look upon our problems as your problems. If you do not look upon our problems as your problems, at any rate, look upon our problems from the patriotic point of view of the Englishman and the Scotchman. India plays a large part in the Empire. I was told by a very high authority that one man out of eight in England and Scotland is dependant to some extent on India. If that is the position and if you cannot look upon India as the land of your adoption, look upon India, at any rate, as the land whose goodwill is of utmost importance to you from the point of view of a patriotic Englishman or Scotchman. But if you act in the way you have done towards the recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee, you cannot expect from us that goodwill, which you ought to value from the point of view of the patriotic, self-interest of your country. My unfortunate experience is that this want of goodwill and appreciation of the Indian point of view is often due to thoughtlessness on your part and not to any deliberate design, though some of my friends in another part of the House ascribe deliberate evil motive.

Now, Sir, the next point to which I would like to draw the attention of the House is the question of the Meston Award. Sir, from my Hon'ble Friend Mr. Donald's speech it seems that his height of ambition is to get the remission of 63 lakhs on a permanent basis. Even if we succeed in getting this remission of 63 lakhs on a permanent basis, can he tell me how is it possible for Government after the remission to enunciate any Government policy for expansion? If he thinks that further taxation is possible he must be suffering from a great delusion.

Since the inauguration of the Reforms the representatives of the people passed three taxation Bills estimated to bring 1 crore 40 lakhs—they have as we know brought in much less. The representatives of the people brought steady pressure on Government which led to a retrenchment to the extent of Rs. 1,75,000. These two, together with the temporary remission of 63 lakhs have enabled the Government just to balance its income and expenditure. If the remission of 63 lakhs be placed on a permanent basis it will only mean just enough to carry on and no money for expansion. Therefore, I voice the demand not only of my party but that of united Bengal when I say that we want the major portion of the export duty on jute. The export duty on jute was for the first time imposed during the War and we took it to be a war time measure and a temporary measure. But our sad experience is that taxes which come as temporary measures remain to stay and remain permanently.

The Joint Parliamentary Committee accepted the position that Bengal had legitimate financial difficulties of a nature peculiar to herself. They commended to the Government of India to relieve her peculiar financial difficulties. The Government of India gave us temporary relief of 63 lakhs for three years only. That three years period is over. The time has now come for a revision of this relief. During these three years the representatives of the people have done their utmost to improve the resources of the Government. The income of the Government of Bengal in the year 1921-22 has been considerably improved partly by taxation, as I have said, and partly by retrenchment. I find, Sir, in the year 1921-22 the total income of the Government of Bengal was 9 crores 87 lakhs. The three new taxation Bills were estimated to bring in 1 crore 40 lakhs. So that according to the estimates and taking into account the retrenchment the improvement is nearly by 3 crores 20 lakhs, that is about one-third of the original income but according to actuals the improvement is by about one-fourth. This was no mean achievement for an infant Legislative Council like the old Bengal Legislative Council. That was the response made by us, the representatives of the people, but what was the response made by my friends opposite, the agents of the Secretary of State, who are responsible to the British Parliament through the Secretary of State? We have shouldered our responsibility. But how have they shouldered theirs? Did they represent to the Government of India and the Secretary of State that they could not carry on, that they could not discharge their responsibilities for good Government unless their resources were improved? My Hon'ble Friend Mr. Donald shakes his head—I have no doubt he has written a soft-letter or two—now I find by a further shake of his head he denies that. I put it to him and to every member of the Government benches, did they go before the Government of India and the Secretary of State with the same earnestness as they did when they thought that the Ordinance was necessary or when the Criminal Amendment Act was necessary?

They did no doubt think that the interest of good Government demanded those measures. I do not question with their motives or their earnestness. If you want to remove the root-cause for which these special measures were necessary, merely legislative enactments will never do. If you want to remove the root causes, go to your superiors, go to the Secretary of State and the British Parliament and say with the same earnestness we want more money to discharge our responsibilities for good Government and this cannot be done unless you remove the iniquity of the Meston Award. But, you must remember this that India will no longer allow provincial jealousy to be played against each other. If you approach the Secretary of State it must be with a scheme that will be just to the demands of other Provinces. How consistently with the needs of the Government of India it can be done, I am prepared to explain elsewhere, if my advice is sought. It is no part of my business to-day to go into the matter. It is my business to-day to call upon my friends opposite to do their duty as manfully and resourcefully as we have a right to expect members of Government to discharge. If you fail to get this iniquity upset the responsibility for bad Government will be yours and the breach between the Government and the people will go on widening and widening. You cannot then blame the people if they distrust you. The people have a right to look upon you as the local agents of the Secretary of State and you are undoubtedly responsible to him. We find you here as such agents and we present this demand to you; it is up to you to make good our demand. I am sure if the same earnestness is shown by you in this respect as you evinced on other occasions the result is bound to be satisfactory.

Mr. S. C. MUKERJI: Sir, this is the fifth occasion that I venture to take part in a preliminary discussion of the annual Budget. It is rather a dull monotonous business; the same stereotyped Budget is presented, the same stereotyped criticisms are put forth and the same stereotyped answers are received from year to year. There was a feeling of numbness at the beginning of this afternoon till Sir P. C. Mitter put a little life into the discussion. Last year the atmosphere was charged with a certain amount of electricity. There was a desperate attempt made to wreck the whole Budget and if possible to bring about a deadlock and it must be admitted that for six months dyarchy has been affected but the administration has not been paralysed. (Hear, hear.) I hope and trust that the policy which was pursued with the best of intentions by my learned friends the Swarajists and the Independents will not again be pursued. By this policy we have lost one good precious year and we do not wish to lose another year. The time has come for stock-taking, for a review of the situation.

Mr. A. C. BANERJEE: I rise to a point of order. Is Mr. Mukerji entitled to treat us to a sermon while discussing the Budget?

Mr. PRESIDENT: I cannot pretend to be a judge of sermons.

Mr. S. C. MUKERJI: I wish my friend Mr. A. C. Banerjee had exercised a little patience. If he had done so he would have seen the relevancy of the observations that the present speaker is making.

Sir, what is the criticism that is made from year to year—that sufficient attention is not paid to the nation-building departments, that no policy is followed which shows that considerable attention is paid to the framing of the Budget for the transferred departments. For that reason, instead of seeking to throw out the Budget the policy that should be pursued is to have a strong Ministry—a ministry which will take its legitimate part in the Cabinet and will bring to bear its impact, its force, upon the consideration of the Cabinet.

(A voice:—It is hopeless, impossible!)

No, it is not hopeless. I am an optimist all my life and I have never believed in pessimism. What we need is a right type of Ministry, a Ministry which will have its voice heard in the Cabinet and will have the backing of the whole country. That is exactly what is needed.

It is a matter of profound regret that the Hon'ble the Finance Member is satisfied with the permanent remission of 63 lakhs. It is rather a sad reading. The thing is reiterated almost from the first page to the last page of his statement, as if this is a panacea of all evils! We demand not simply the remission of the 63 lakhs to be contributed to the Imperial Exchequer but we demand the total undoing of the Meston Award. Otherwise it will be the old story again. There will be no money forthcoming for the transferred departments.

There are four things before us. First the remission of 63 lakhs, and the undoing of the Meston Award. If we fail in these two then we shall perforce be driven to two other things, viz., the augmentation of revenue by fresh taxation and drastic retrenchment of expenditure in order to find money. This Council should put forth a demand not simply for the remission of 63 lakhs—that is the irreducible minimum—but should also demand the total undoing of the wicked iniquitous Meston Award which has practically crippled the resources of the Bengal Government. One thing is sure, we shall never agree in future to fresh taxation. Why? When fresh taxation was introduced we were given to understand that the major part of the proceeds of the new taxation Bills would go towards the upbuilding of the nation-building departments. May I ask the Hon'ble the Finance Member whether that pledge has been redeemed? The whole of those taxes—it is admitted in the Hon'ble the Finance Member's statement this year—has practically been swallowed up by the normal expenditure of the Province. We do not want to be confronted again with fresh taxation and I, therefore, humbly beseech this House that every effort should be made to present one united

front and not to have any more split in the camp. What does it matter if dyarchy is given another chance? Anything that will do some good to the people of the country, that will ameliorate the condition. That is to be preferred far more than to have the sentimental satisfaction that the Budget has been wrecked, that the Ministry has been undone and that a defeat has been inflicted upon the Government.

One more word, Sir, and I have finished. The Hon'ble the Finance Member tells us and gives us in explicit terms the policy of the Government regarding excise. I wish to draw the attention of the Finance Member to my resolution which was passed on the 1st September, 1921, in which this Council adopted the principle of local option and nothing has been done in that matter. I am not a total prohibitionist but I am a local optionist and in that resolution it was definitely said that the principle of local option should be introduced at least in municipal areas, and that resolution remains a dead letter still to this day. And if Government is going to treat that resolution in this shabby fashion I shall not be surprised if during the life-time of this Council a resolution for total prohibition is moved and Government find themselves confronted with the problem of total prohibition, like some of the other provincial Governments.

Maulvi WAHED HOSSAIN: At the annual ceremony of the Budget discussion the usual formality is either to congratulate the Hon'ble the Finance Member for presenting a prosperous Budget, or to express regret for a deficit one. This year's Budget is neither prosperous nor deficit, but partakes the nature of both as the winds will veer. I do not know whether the House will rejoice on the Budget, or express regret. But there is something in this year's Budget which is likely to strike the imagination of the House. The Hon'ble the Finance Member has given an indication of a generous policy for which he claims credit for the Government. It will be uncharitable on my part to grudge it. The Government is entitled to the fullest credit for the homœopathic doses in which the generosity is being administered.

Some people assert that dyarchy is dead, some say it is alive. But the spectacle we have seen only a few days ago, tends to show that it is writhing in agony. Be that as it may, many will be inclined to ascertain the useful purposes it has served. I may be excused for referring to them as I am convinced that they have an important bearing on our Budget. This House is well aware that since the inauguration of the Reforms, we have been confronted with a deficit Budget every year. Before the introduction of dyarchy this province had a prosperous Budget with an opening balance of 2½ crores in 1921-22. But this costly dyarchy has swallowed up the surplus and depleted the Exchequer to such an extent that three new taxes had to be

imposed on the people and yet the deficit continues in spite of all retrenchments considered possible by the Government. After an experience of its separation for three years, its true character was revealed before the Enquiry Committee. Dyarchy has been declared by its staunchest supporters as non-workable and unsuitable yet the interested ones still go on backing it with their fond hopes.

It is an open secret now that the transferred side under dyarchy has not received proper treatment. Almost all the independent witnesses from every province—especially the ex-Ministers whose opinion is entitled to our respect, complained before the Enquiry Committee that the transferred departments were culpably neglected on the plea of want of funds. One of the reasons for this neglect was stated to be that there was no real responsive co-operation on the part of the Government. It has been whispered in certain quarters that the object behind this captious policy was to prove the incompetency of Indians to administer the transferred departments. Whatever may be the real object the result of this blind and unwise policy has been to create distrust and suspicion and alienate the sympathy even of those supporters of the Government who wanted to work dyarchy successfully. Out of disgust they have not hesitated to place before the Enquiry Committee their bitter experiences of the inner circle and have not only exposed the hollowness of dyarchy, but have hinted that the authorities have been the real obstructionists. It is not too much to say that the want of confidence and the unsympathetic attitude of the Government as a whole is responsible for this sort of feeling.

There is another fact to which I desire to draw the attention of the Government. Within the last few years and since the promulgation of the Reform Scheme, several taxes have been imposed on the people by the Imperial as well as the provincial Governments. The burden of taxes has fallen on the people with undue severity and yet there are Bills awaiting the sanction of the Council for further taxation. The people naturally hold their so-called popular Ministers responsible for the enhanced taxation and the Ministers are quite helpless under dyarchy to satisfy them. Equally important is the fact that while the imposition of the new taxes under dyarchy has made the present administration unpopular, the increased taxation has not led to the desired development of the nation-building departments. Consequently, the people are justified in thinking that the present unworkable dyarchy is not at all suited to the needs of the country and that it has only bolstered up a bloated administration and added to the trouble and misery of the people, by the levy of new taxes. It is a patent fact that the costly dyarchy cannot be propped up without such taxation.

Last year during the general discussion on the Budget it was observed that there should be some policy behind the Budget. The Hon'ble the Finance Member admitted that there was no such policy behind it. In the Budget under discussion we find that some increased grants have been allotted to certain departments and a list of works to be carried out has been shown separately. I think this was not what was understood by the Budget policy. I take the opportunity of suggesting without being presumptuous that the Budget, in order to be popular, should indicate—(1) an intelligent policy which has some intrinsic merit behind it, and (2) a continuity of a generous policy which is expansive and leads to development *per se*. The intelligent policy properly enunciated will determine the nature of development and the generous grants will give a wide scope for its operation. Such a policy will at once show how and in what direction the various departments are developing and whether they are likely to satisfy the needs of the country. But, Sir, it must be frankly admitted that there is some earnest of a generous policy in the present Budget. But generosity has been shown in such a small quantity that it does not even satisfy the Finance Member himself as the trend of his speech indicates. A sum of Rs. 49½ lakhs only has been provided for new expenditure for 1925-26. Excluding Civil Works the Reserved side gets 7 lakhs and the Transferred 17½ lakhs out of the sum. With these amounts all the departments must carry out their respective schemes of development. But when we look to the allotments made to the respective departments our hearts sink in despair. Compared with the actual requirements of the country these grants seem to be a drop in the ocean. "On these figures," observes the Hon'ble the Finance Member, "we may, I think, claim credit that Government have been attending to the needs of the transferred departments." I leave it to the Finance Member to judge for himself whether it is a credit or discredit to the Government to spend lavishly on pet purposes and bestow with a stepmother's love scanty sums of money on the nation-building departments.

The Hon'ble the Finance Member has made reference to Mr. C. R. Das who put forward last year in the Council "a constructive proposal of development." The constructive scheme of Mr. Das consisted of several proposals. But the Finance Member informs us that he singled out one particular proposal which "had reference to the public health establishment of local authorities in the district, primarily district boards." He has not given any reason why other constructive proposals were rejected by him. There was nothing sinister behind the proposal. It is an admitted fact that the nation-building departments have not hitherto received proper consideration for want of funds. The proposal of Mr. Das suggested the means of getting an adequate fund for developing those departments. Although

the scheme contemplated a loan of 6 crores of rupees, the whole responsibility of raising and repaying it, was accepted by the proposer of the scheme. If the Government were afraid of entrusting the leader of a party with large powers, the scheme might have been modified with proper safeguards ; but there is hardly any reason for shelving the proposal and starving the nation-building departments on the development of which depend the life and existence of millions of the people of this country. I think that it is high time for reconsidering the proposal in pursuance of the policy which Government desire to follow, but cannot do it for want of funds. While the Government asks all the parties to be responsive, the authorities themselves are not responsive to their suggestions. The absence of responsiveness is a sad commentary on the wisdom of the authorities.

The Hon'ble the Finance Member has in his Budget speech, referred to the Bhatpara sewerage scheme, which will cost Rs. 18 lakhs. As far as I have been able to gather information relating to the subject, it appears that the mill-owners' contributions amounting to Rs. 11½ lakhs have been in deposit since 1913 or thereabout, and the interest on the amount has accumulated to the extent of about 2½ lakhs. Thus the whole amount available for the scheme is about Rs. 15 lakhs. If this be a fact that Rs. 3 lakhs only will be required to make up the full amount of 18 lakhs, the importance of this scheme will at once be clear to the House from another point of view. Alarm has often been raised in the press and the platform—nay, even in this Council—regarding the pollution of the river Ganges. It is a notorious fact that the effluents from the septic tanks now flow into the river and pollute its water. There have been occasional cries against this sort of pollution. Several suggestions were made to divert the discharges from the septic tanks into some other channel. Now the proposed sewerage, when constructed, will not only keep the river free from pollution but will be a boon to the district from the sanitary point of view. I, therefore, submit that the scheme should be taken up in hand without further delay.

I find with regret that neither primary education as a whole nor the education of the backward races and the depressed classes has received proper attention of the Government. There has been an incessant cry in the country for free primary education. But the Budget does not disclose the adoption of a bold policy for formulating any large scheme for such education. The Hon'ble the Finance Member speaks of the panchayati union scheme and points out that " of 7,012 unions in the Province, 3,394 have already been provided with schools " and that a " sum of one lakh which has been allotted for this purpose will enable district boards to construct 100 additional schools." We are not told whether one primary school established in every panchayati union is sufficient for the localities included in such union, nor are

we informed within what period 3,394 unions have been provided with schools. But it is clear that 3,618 unions still remain unprovided and if 100 schools are started every year as provided in this year's Budget, it will take at least 66 years for providing each of the remaining unions with one school. This period is too long even in a nation's life. The people will never be satisfied with this sort of tardy, unsympathetic and negligent policy nor with the slow progress in the field of primary education. It should be borne in mind that the vast majority of the backward races and the depressed classes contribute sufficiently to the revenue of the country and demand sufficient fund for the education of their children.

The House may be aware that all the municipalities in Bengal enjoy the privilege of the elective system save and except the three municipalities in the premier district of 24-Parganas, viz., Titaghar, Garulia and Bahtpara. The elective system was in force in the municipalities of Garulia and Bhatpara, but the privilege has been withdrawn from them. In moving a resolution on the Local Self-Government at the meeting of the Bengal Council Sir Surendra Nath Banerjea, the then Minister in charge, observed:—

> There are municipalities with a fringe area inhabited by population who are in no way connected with mills. I have in my mind the case of the Garulia Municipality which used to be a part of the North Barrackpore Municipality. A section of the population of this municipality are in no way connected with the mills. They were in the enjoyment of the elective franchise before, when they were a part of the North Barrackpore Municipality. They have been deprived of it. Is it right and proper that they should have been disfranchised? A concession once made is never withdrawn. This is the proud record of the British administration in India. Why should an exception be made in the case of these unfortunate rate-payers of Garulia who have been disfranchised for no fault of theirs? In these mill municipalities by all means give adequate powers over local affairs to the mill authorities; but the interest of the population unconnected with the mills should be safeguarded by allowing them to choose their own representatives.

This remark made by the responsible Minister is equally applicable to the case of Bhatpara whose population have also been disfranchised for no fault of theirs. But I fail to understand why has the proud record of the British administration been cast to the winds in the case of the mill municipalities?

Bhatpara has been the cradle of renowned pundits and a famous seat of oriental learning and culture. Garulia and Titaghar are not more backward than Kamarhati on which the privilege of the elective system has very recently been conferred. It is rather surprising that while all the mill municipalities are considered competent to select their representatives for the provincial Council and the Legislative Assembly, they are considered unfit for choosing their representatives for their own municipalities. The principle on which the right of franchise has been conferred on all municipalities is the same. There

is no reason why the three municipalities of Bengal only should be deprived of the elementary rights of citizenship.

Maharaj Kumar SRIS CHANDRA NANDY: Sir, the current Budget discloses a disheartening state of our provincial finances. Again the old story—the deficit. Great caution has, no doubt, been employed in the language of the presentation and great has also been the care to explain the deficiencies, and the working out of the figures is quite well-done. Notwithstanding all this there has been some lack of foresight and circumspection in the preparation of the Budget. No ways and means have been suggested to cover up the deficit and to surmount our financial difficulties. Apologies for half a dozen times for the 63 lakhs contribution to the Imperial Revenues and the mention of the Lee Commission recommendations as many times, together with a feeling of unsureness regarding the ultimate fate of the provisions for uncertainty about the remission of the Imperial contribution form the characteristic features of the Hon'ble the Finance Member's speech.

It is surely gratifying to find, Sir, that the Hon'ble the Finance Member has made himself amenable to Council criticisms. Further presentation of the Irrigation details this year as suggested by my friend and colleague, Rai Harendranath Chaudhuri, and the offer to place further details, if needed, at our disposal betokens surely a change of heart. Increase of grants long clamoured for on some of the important and under-fed heads on the transferred side afford additional proofs of the same change. The Hon'ble Members in charge of the reserved departments have further amplified those proofs by promising us to furnish details if called for of their respective departments.

Sir, the Hon'ble the Finance Member cannot but be hardly congratulated on the savings that have been effected in the several departments and for his anticipations of increase in Land Revenue and Stamps, I fully endorse the policy that has actuated him to provide recurring grants for the transferred side only and to make increased allotments for rural water-supply and public health of local bodies as also for his provisions, meagre though they may be, for scientific and learned societies.

Sir, the Hon'ble the Executive Members by unfolding the reasons for the various demands of their departments have afforded the Council a sort of basis of their guiding policy. This departure from the customary practice is bound to evoke our gratitude and admiration.

It is a matter for great satisfaction, Sir, that education has not been deprived of its due share although I should have liked to have seen a larger grant than Rs. 3,000 for the depressed class students' hostels. Certainly, the depressed class students number far more than the Anglo-Indian students for whose barracks, at the Sibpur Engineering College only, it is contemplated to spend Rs. 10,000.

Greatly gratifying it is that the higher education of our Moslem brethren in Calcutta and their students' housing question in the mufassal has received due recognition in the Budget. Not less so is the promise held out about the increase of pay to our poorly-paid school masters. Equally so in the provision to construct a Teachers' Training College and Demonstration School at Ballygunge. It is a pity, Sir, that in a year like this so much as Rs. 43,320 have been sought to provide the Bethune College girls with the luxury of motor conveyances. The idea is no doubt grand, but grander still it would be if that amount could have been diverted towards maternity and child-welfare, provisions for which have been disappointing. To utilise Rs. 1,30,000 out of a total grant of Rs. 2,00,000 in the Civil Works for building a hostel for the Burdwan Medical School is rather a disproportionate demand. Again to spend, Sir, Rs. 2,87,000 for tar-macadamising some of the Calcutta Maidan roads at the sacrifice of the health and sanitation of the Province is extremely deplorable.

Sir, it is an encouraging feature that the Boy Scouts movement has at last come in for a share in the annual Budget, although the fascinating movement deserves much more than Rs. 2,000. I cannot but decry the provision of Rs. 2,68,000 for nurses' quarters and their electrics at the Presidency General Hospital when admittedly the revised scales of pay of our inadequately-paid Jail staff are being overlooked for the sake of tight finances. This expenditure being neither urgent nor constructive can easily wait a prosperous year. At the same time I cannot but appreciate the announcement for the founding of a Borstal establishment for our juvenile jail population in the near future.

Increase of grants on Police head, Sir, has always been looked upon with disfavour, and although I do not question from outside the grave reasons of state that may have necessitated the increase of the staff expense of the Criminal Investigation Department by 3¼ lakhs, yet I cannot for a moment reconcile myself to the expenditure of Rs. 8,90,000 intended to be incurred on new works only for the police in such a year of rigid finances even on the ground of urgent administrative necessity. At least the Calcutta Police works and acquisitions could have waited till some future prosperous year.

In the General Administration, Sir, the demand of Rs. 50,000 on Government House works and an equal amount for rearrangement of offices in the Writers' Buildings should not have been made in a deficit year like this.

Sir, on Public Health I cannot but express my deep disappointment for the scanty provisions that have been made for Malaria, Kala-azar, Small-pox, Maternity and Child Welfare and the Epidemics Emergency Fund. Prudence dictates that being the quinquennial year provision

for small-pox prevention at least ought to have been larger. As I fail to find any provision for anti-cholera operations in the Budget I am naturally led to conclude that perhaps the Lee recommendations will stamp out the disease or the Criminal Investigation Department efforts promise to scare it out from the Province altogether. It is deplorable that the anti-cholera operations should be entirely neglected and monies should be found for extensions and improvements of such useless items as an office for the Calcutta Canal Subdivision and quarters for Madaripur Subdivisional Officer.

Sir, it is also extremely distressing to observe that in a Province where agriculture forms the principal occupation and mainstay of the people there is absolutely no indication anywhere to expand the practical operations of this important department although I own Rs. 46,000 have been allotted for the construction of Farm buildings. The cow, the ox, and the buffalo form the most potent factors in the production of wealth, but we find no mention in the whole Budget of cattle breeding and dairy-farming subjects so cognate to agriculture. Agricultural Banks which safeguard the interests and finances of cultivators and producers seem to be wholly ignored.

In conclusion, Sir, I cannot but echo with the Hon'ble the Finance Member that unless and until the Meston Settlement has been modified and iniquities thereof removed, it would be impracticable to feed even the normal wants in the administration with our anticipated revenues. Ours should therefore now be an earnest endeavour to get the Award amended as soon as possible, because otherwise there is no hope for progress and development of our Province.

Babu JOGENDRA NATH MITRA: Sir, the prominent feature of the coming year's Budget presented by the Hon'ble the Finance Member is its deficit character. This condition of things will continue as long as Government by the officials will last. The only remedy for this evil is government by the people and for the people. A large portion of the revenue of the Province partly sucked out of the life blood of an ill-fed, badly housed and famished people and partly derived by exploiting the vice of drink and drugs is being swallowed up by highly paid officials and starvation of the nation-building departments is its inevitable consequence. When there was a great clamour for reduction of expenditure the Retrenchment Committee was formed but all of us present here know how their mature and well considered recommendations were dealt with. The Hon'ble the Finance Member says in his opening speech that effect has been given after very full and detailed consideration to the recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee in so far as they were found possible in accordance with the determined policy of the Government. The determined policy of the Government being the preservation of the fat berths reserved for the highly paid officials, the Committee's recommendations for the abolition of the

offices of the Divisional Commissioners and other highly paid officials have been rejected.

The Government is fully conscious of their own guilt of refusing a fair share of administration to the people and they are, therefore, naturally suspicious towards them as the guilty mind is always so. The consequence of this is an inordinate desire on the part of the Government to strengthen the police at any cost. Hence in the coming year's Budget the police expenditure is three lakhs of rupees in excess of that of the present year.

Following the policy of giving some repose to popular criticism the Hon'ble the Finance Member has increased the provision for rural water-supply in the Province from Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 2 lakhs and 50 thousand but he has at the same time reduced the total grant for Public Health by more than an equal amount. Does the Hon'ble the Finance Member think that the health of the Province has so improved that this reduction will not affect its people in any way? Is not the Hon'ble the Finance Member aware that in Bengal deaths from malaria alone are 40,000 a year, not to speak of heavy child mortality and the havoc done annually by Kala-azar, Cholera, Small-pox and other preventible diseases. The funds allotted for anti-malarial measures, combating Kala-azar and other sanitary improvements are most superficial.

The Bhairab scheme for the district of Jessore which was almost complete during the administration of Lord Ronaldshay has not been provided for in the Budget of the coming year. Most of the rivers in the districts of Jessore and Nadia take their rise from the Mathabhanga but they have been cut off from the parent river in consequence of silting up of their sources. These rivers are now converted into stagnant pools in their upper reaches affording constant facilities for the breeding of anopheles and growth of water-hyacinth. Various schemes were prepared by the Jessore Public Works Department, Drainage Division during the time of Lord Carmichael for the improvement of the rivers of the district but no effect has been given to any of those schemes. Some of these rivers may be revived without much cost or difficulty. A cut of about three miles joining Nabaganga with Mathabhanga at a cost not exceeding Rs. 50,000 will revive the dead river which will benefit a large portion of Magurah, Jhenidah and Chuadanga subdivisions. The Kumar, the Chitra and the Ichhamati may be similarly improved by joining them with the Mathabhanga. The importance of improving the Mathabhanga itself by removing the silt far at its source where it rises from the Ganges is equally urgent. Jessore is a river district. Its material prosperity largely depends upon its waterways but unfortunately these waterways are almost obstructed to the detriment of the health and prosperity of about 19 lakhs of its population. Malaria and Kala-azar are gradually gaining ground and

creating havoc. The population has decreased by over two lakhs within the last 40 years and if this state of things are allowed to continue there will survive no one to pay any revenue to the Government in future.

We are informed that there is a surplus of about two lakhs of rupees out of the funds of the settlement operations of the district of Jessore, contributed by all sections of the people holding land in the district, and it is really astonishing that this surplus has been incorporated with the general revenue of the Province without making any provision in the Budget for any special benefit for the people of Jessore, whose money the Government has thus misappropriated. We the people of Jessore can fairly claim the surplus for the benefit of its contributors by giving effect even partially to the improvement of its river system which is uppermost in our mind for over half a century. It may not be out of place to mention here that the problem of destroying water-hyacinth which is engaging the attention of the people and the Government will be solved to a great extent with the improvement of the river system. If the rivers are reclaimed and made flowing they will be strong enough and capable of floating the hyacinth into the sea.

May I ask the Hon'ble the Finance Member if the question of the life and death of so many men living in the district is not more important than the question of Calcutta police buildings and of improving the roads on the maidan for which 11 lakhs and 37 thousand rupees have been provided?

The only new feature of the educational Budget is the grant of one lakh of rupees for the extension of the panchayati union schools but the needs of primary education cannot be fulfilled without at least a crore of rupees. The Government can easily see their way to float a loan of 85 thousand rupees for the providing of better accommodation for the Calcutta police but not for the cause of free and compulsory primary education in the province.

Rai BADRIDAS GOENKA Bahadur. The Hon'ble the Finance Member has dilated at length on the supposed liberal treatment of the transferred group, but the figures show no perceptible improvement from the people's point of view. Thus in the revised estimate, the percentages of expenditure on the reserved and transferred groups, are about 66 and 34, respectively, and in the next year's Budget also the proportions are practically the same. The avowed policy of the Government is to increase the power of this House over the finances of the Province, but it is a rude shock to find, that even omitting Rs. 63 lakhs the contribution to the Central Government, the percentage of voted expenditure to the total has gone down, being 84 against 85 in the last year. Even

if it were possible to spend lavishly for the transferred departments, there was certainly nothing to boast of. All the world over the secondary functions of Government are receiving increasing attention; it has now been rightly realised that social services are of direct benefit to the State as a whole, and public expenditure on these is a sound investment, because it lessens the number of the unfit. Probably no province in India requires to-day such careful attention, in this direction as Bengal with its problems of Malaria, Kala-azar, dearth of drinking water and middle class unemployment. Sir, every one will admit that law and order are the primary concerns of a Government, but they are not the end, they are but means towards the end being the real progress, moral and material, of the community. To try to attain that, is but the moral duty of every Government. It was inevitable that with the advent of the Reforms, our expenditure on primary functions should increase, but it must never be forgotten, that the success of the Reforms depends on what the transferred departments achieve for the people, and so the cardinal principle of the Government should be to spend as much as possible for these departments.

The Budget estimate for the coming year reveals no hopeful feature. Excluding loan operations and new works the ordinary expenditure is Rs. 10,78,23,000, against a possible revenue of Rs. 10,45,16,000. If, on the other hand, the provincial contribution is omitted, but expenditure on new works retained, the total expenditure is Rs. 10,81,11,000 against a revenue of Rs. 10,55,11,000. It follows, that to have a balanced Budget we must, not only get the provincial contribution remitted, but reduce the expenditure on new works by about Rs. 26 lakhs. Our case for remission is an overwhelmingly strong one, and the Central Government has a surplus Budget; there is thus every possibility, that the system of provincial contributions will be discontinued, or at least modified, and Bengal will get permanent exemption. But if it does not, all these new schemes shall have to be modified as the Hon'ble the Finance Member has said. It is for this reason I would have liked the Finance Member not to have put these items in the Budget now, he could have done so, without the element of uncertainty, when proposals of the Central Government were definitely known. Even with this remission, our financial position is not a very sound one. The establishment charges will go on increasing for some time to come as a consequence of the time-scale of pay, and there will be greater liabilities under pensions and superannuations owing to changed circumstances. It is difficult to guage at this stage what the exact course of prices will be, but it is almost certain that there will be no substantial fall in the immediate future. All these point to a continuously increasing expenditure against more or less a stationary revenue. If to it be added, the normal requirements of the Province, in the direction of

fresh annual expenditures on new schemes, which will not be immediately productive in the literal sense of the word, the finances of the Province leave much to be desired.

Although I believe that there is much room for further retrenchment I feel the time has now come when we must look around for means of expanding our revenue. There are, indeed, insurmountable difficulties in the way. Our land revenue is inelastic, and I believe that, in spite of the activities of the Taxation Inquiry Committee, Government will not violate the sanctity of contract by abolishing the permanent settlement. An increase in excise revenue we certainly do not want, while that from stamp is beyond our control. But we need not be disheartened; fresh avenues must be found and existing ones developed—as has been admitted by the Hon'ble Member in charge; one of the most promising and potential sources in the latter class is the forest. I insisted on this point last year also but so far no forward policy seems to have been adopted in this direction. It is a pity that Bombay with a forest area a little more and the United Provinces much less, than that of Bengal derive much higher returns from this source. I do not believe, that this comparatively unfavourable position of Bengal is due to any fundamental defect of Bengal forests, they must be due to a lack of initiative. The same can be said of Cinchona plantations, here the expenditure is steadily increasing but the revenue shows no improvement. The plantations have all possible facilities climatic and otherwise but still the bark is much inferior in quinine contents to that of other countries and specially of Dutch East Indies. This state of affairs must be remedied. Sir, the Taxation Inquiry Committee will certainly devise means for developing the provincial revenue, but I believe that a start can be made, by trying to provide irrigation works in areas of uncertain rainfall and high lands, such as the north-western part of the Province. The success of co-operative irrigation measures in Bankura, Birbhum and neighbouring districts clearly indicates, that there is a genuine demand for such assistance, and people are ready to pay for them. For small works Government may encourage co-operative methods but where larger initial expenditure is needed Government may conveniently step in. This will bring a decent revenue to the Provincial Exchequer, and at the same time prove immensely beneficial to the people. From the standpoint of revenue, irrigation schemes with certainty of return are much superior to any other form of non-tax revenue. Sir, this is but one of the numerous channels in which the activities of the Government can be directed to their own benefit, as well as that of the people.

The actual figures in the Budget for the coming year do not invite much comment except on traditional lines. The revenue, exclusive of loan operations shows a very small increase of Rs. 1,63,000 while inclusive of those there is a positive decrease. When the Hon'ble the

Finance Member spoke of an increase of 10½ lakhs he evidently forgot, what he had to say immediately afterwards in connection with excise revenue, *viz.* "the difference between this (5 lakhs normal increase) and the figure 17 lakhs which represents the total anticipated increase, is the result of a revised system of accounting." There is not much to be said about other items of revenue, the major heads are stationary—one cannot expect them to be otherwise, while the minor heads show nearly uniform reduction. A peculiar case is that of Head XIII, which now shows a debit receipt, in the absence of detailed figures, it is not possible to find out how the much vaunted navigation projects are faring. Such figures may help us to gauge the prospects of the more ambitious schemes we have before us.

On the expenditure side of our Budget estimate we have, omitting provincial contribution, but including expenditures on new works the figures Rs. 10 crores 81 lakhs, showing a deficit of Rs. 26 lakhs. It is true that the new expenditure is mostly of a non-recurring character excepting about Rs. 9 lakhs, but we must not forget that in the present condition of the Province such expenditure must be incurred for many years to come. I do not really understand how with our inelastic revenue the authorities can hope to continue to spend at this rate without curtailing their permanent expenditure. Sooner or later they must do it, but sooner the better.

The Irrigation Budget though lacking details reveals some interesting features. I am glad that provision had been made for dredging the Deagra, I wish that adequate provisions were made for improving the river system of the outer route wherever necessary. It is significant that year after year we have to spend substantial amounts, for maintaining the bhil route and dredging the few miles of the Lower Kumar. The bhil route used to be regarded as a productive scheme for a time, but now it is placed in the category of non-productive schemes, and curiously enough expenditure on the Grand Trunk Canal project and certain dredgers is now regarded as productive.

It is gratifying to see that more funds have been allotted to the Education Budget, and the major portion of this increase is earmarked for secondary and primary education. The lot of the teachers in non-Government secondary schools is really a very hard one, and His Excellency under whose direction this grant has been proposed will earn the sincere gratitude, of this ill-paid but most useful class. Another hopeful sign is the making up of the differences between the Calcutta University and Government. It is inconceivable that the University, the fountain of learning and culture, should remain estranged from the State.

I must admit that in spite of all that has been said by the Hon'ble the Finance Member, I think that both the Medical and Public Health

Budgets are unsatisfactory, while the increase in the former is illusory. The Ranchi Lunatic Asylum is fast proving to be a white elephant, and I do not know how much more we shall have to pay on this account. I am not, I must also say, convinced by the argument as to the causes of non-utilisation of grants to mufassal dispensaries. There may be real limits to the increased charges for medical expenditure, which local bodies can incur from their own funds, but that is no reason why Government grants should be refused. Sir, one is also surprised to learn from the Hon'ble Member's observations on the Public Health Budget, that the total grant for the next year is less than that of the current year, simply because, the local municipalities have no schemes in readiness towards which they desire assistance from Government. I cannot know what this peculiar state of affairs is due to, but it may be that these municipalities although they may be urgently in need of Government assistance, cannot satisfy the conditions laid down for such help. Anyhow, Government could have been more liberal and lenient in their terms. It is true, as the Finance Member says, that an adequate supply of good water can never be provided if the local people and local authorities rely mainly on Government subsidies, but Government initiative will go a long way to solve this urgent problem of the Province. Sir, I have no observation to make on the Agriculture Budget excepting that all other major provinces (including the United Provinces and Punjab) spend more for their Agriculture Department than we do here, certainly not complimentary to us. I may add also, that the mere provision of Rs. 25,000 for eradicating the water-hyacinth pest, will be of no avail, unless accompanied by compulsory co-operation by the people. The possibilities before the co-operative department have been amply demonstrated by the developments of irrigation in the Burdwan division and, as I have said, Government should not be slow to make the fullest use of the opportunities, to help the people as well as themselves. A very rapid rise, Sir, has taken place in our expenditure in England from 13 lakhs 11 thousands in 1921-22, the first year of the Reforms, it has gone as high as 25 lakhs 40 thousands in the current year, while the estimate for the next is 35 lakhs 47 thousands. It is true that these payments are results of statutory obligations, but it shows how the provincial resources have been saddled to the disadvantage of transferred subjects.

Last year I suggested that in framing provincial Budgets like ours, specially that for the transferred group, Government could conveniently take the advice of a committee consisting of members of this House, businessmen and leaders of public opinion from the mufassal. This is specially important as the people's representatives cannot suggest, or insert in the Budget any new demands. In the case of provincial Governments such a system is free from the objection that the leakage of any information regarding changes in income-tax or customs may

result in loss of revenue. A committee like this would have been of special use in the preparation of the present Budget, when we had no Ministers, and I still hope the authorities will seriously consider the feasibility of accepting this suggestion.

[At this stage the Council was adjourned for 15 minutes.]

Adjournment.

After the adjournment there being no quorum present, the Council adjourned till 3 P.M. on Friday the 27th February, 1925, at the Town Hall, Calcutta.

Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Council assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act.

The Council met in the Council Chamber in the Town Hall, Calcutta, on Friday, the 27th February, 1925, at 3 P.M.

Present:

The Hon'ble the President in the Chair, the four Hon'ble Members of the Executive Council and 90 nominated and elected members

Amendments regarding transferred departments.

Mr. S. N. HALDAR: May I interrupt for a moment please? I want to know whether we shall be given further time for sending in our amendments regarding the transferred departments, because Ministers have not yet been appointed and the date for sending in amendments has been fixed for the 7th March I do not think this time will be sufficient, and unless you give us further time, it is impossible for us to send in our amendments in time.

Mr. PRESIDENT: (the Hon'ble Sir Evan Cotton): I propose to give further time. I shall give you as much time as I can. You will realise that we have got to get the amendments ready and to get them on the paper.

Budget of the Government of Bengal for 1925-26.

The general discussion of the Budget was then resumed:—

Mr. W. L. TRAVERS: Sir, a study of the Budget of the Government of Bengal which has recently been presented to us, combined also with a study of the Railway Budget presented to the Assembly and the revenue returns show that at least trade and commerce in India and this province are upon the up-grade. There is a distinct improvement. At the same time that improvement is very slow and it is doing at present but little to relieve the acute and distressing unemployment which is prevalent amongst the *bhadralok* youths of this province. Sir, I would like, in relation to that unemployment, to offer a few observations upon the economic side of the Budget.

At the present moment there is undoubtedly a large amount of capital ready and available waiting for commercial undertakings in Bengal. But the financier who controls that capital has to wait on the one side for a prospect of profitable return against the inherent risks in new business, and those risks are large in a province, such as Bengal, where

there is so much development. At the present time the capitalist has to contend with many risks, first of all with taxation. A capitalist risks his money in a venture, and, if successful, the State takes a large proportion of the results in taxation. Secondly, there is also the fact that there has recently been the post-war depression during which a great deal of capital was lost, and, therefore, a new venture was subjected to more careful scrutiny than would ordinarily be the case. But the point to which I wish to draw particular attention of the Hon'ble Members of this Council, is that these risks are considerably increased not only by the political agitation of recent years, but also by the policy of obstruction which has been adopted by the opposite party during the last year. I wish to draw the attention of all hon'ble members to this fact, that there is an economic aspect of this Budget outside the political, and that those who wish to do something towards reducing the unemployment in this province will not do so if they adopt the policy of obstruction. I mean by obstruction, obstruction pure and simple; I do not mean of course intelligent criticism of the Budget itself. Capital requires above all things stability first and security second, and obstruction and political agitation combined with denouncement of whatever Government does, reduces stability and reduces security, and, therefore, does nothing to reduce this distressing unemployment. In connection with the subject of unemployment, I venture to suggest to Government that it is well worth a trial to introduce an agricultural colony; the scheme which has been put forward by Captain Patavel in which the young *bhadralok* youths of Bengal might learn the science of agriculture by practical works in the fields, is well worth a trial, and I think members of this Council would gladly devote much money to such an object.

To turn to the Budget itself. I should like to congratulate the Hon'ble Mr. Donald upon the presentation of the most progressive Budget which finance has allowed since the introduction of the Reforms. I suggest that this Council should once more, if it be permitted, pass an unanimous resolution to be sent to the Assembly and the Government of India that the contribution of 63 lakhs should be once for all eliminated.

Now, Sir, under the head of medical schools, the Hon'ble the Member has reported in his speech that no schemes are ready. I would like once more to put forward the progress we have made in our scheme in Jalpaiguri. I hope to be able to place the scheme itself before Government before three months have elapsed. Meanwhile, we have been successful in collecting Rs. 85,000 for the extension and improvement of the Jalpaiguri hospital. We have been able to do so largely by the generosity of the tea industry, shareholders and Board of Directors, who have helped us most generously. I venture to say that in a district like Jalpaiguri, where we have no wealthy zemindars to help us, it is no

small achievement. Plans of the new building have been passed by the Surgeon-General and the building will be commenced at once. The Chairman of the district board is addressing the Chairmen of the other district boards of the division for assistance in the recurring cost. I hope, therefore, that our plans having progressed to such an extent Government will in a supplementary Budget help us by an allotment for the commencement of a medical school during the coming cold weather. I have one or two suggestions to put forward in regard to the Agricultural Department, being a practical agriculturist myself. The first of these suggestions is that it is advisable to make a soil survey of the experimental farms. I am delighted to see the progress in regard to experimental farms, but I urge this for two reasons. First of all, the soil of the experimental farm should approximate at least to one of the main types of soil in the district; if that is not so, results will be very small. Secondly, it is reported, and judging by the reports of the Agricultural Department itself, I am afraid it is true, that in the old days, the location of many of these agricultural farms was chosen in a haphazard manner by non-experts and the soil, I am afraid, is very poor, and no results can be expected from such soil. It is waste of money to carry on with such farms if it be true, and there is nothing for it but to change the location. At any rate, I think this should be definitely settled, and if necessary, as I say, localities must be changed.

In regard to the allotment to deal with water-hyacinth, I confess that I am somewhat pessimistic about any good results being achieved from methods such as spraying, which, if it proves to be successful, will undoubtedly be very costly, and it can only be applied to the larger waterways and such like. There is in my mind one method of dealing with water-hyacinth, and that is a universal campaign in the countryside. Government itself, I think, can do very little, but if an organisation can be achieved by the whole of the people of the countryside, rich and poor alike, turning out for one whole week during the hot weather before the planting of the rice crop and actually working to clear the hyacinth, there would be some good results. At any rate the spread of the water-hyacinth would be checked.

I venture to suggest, that the leaders of the Congress party should devote their organisation to that purpose which I am quite sure would bring great blessings to the people of Eastern Bengal.

Dr. PRAMATHANATH BANERJEA: The Budget for the year 1925-26 reveals a most unsatisfactory state of things. The revenue is estimated at 10 crores and 45 lakhs, but against this an expenditure of 11 crores and 34½ lakhs is provided for. The result is a deficit of no less a sum than 89 lakhs. In the three years 1922-23 to 1924-25, the average annual growth of revenue and the average annual growth of expenditure have been 15½ lakhs and 13½ lakhs, respectively. This may be regarded as normal expansion. But in the Budget for the ensuing

year an increase of 14 lakhs over the revised estimates of the current year is expected on the revenue side, while the expenditure shows an increase of 1 crore and 35 lakhs. Of this additional amount, 63 lakhs is the provincial contribution to the Central Government; but the remaining 72 lakhs represent real increase of expenditure.

The causes which have led to this sudden and enormous addition to our financial burden are not far to seek. If the Budget figures are carefully studied, we find that in almost all the departments, the establishment charges, especially those relating to the higher services, have jumped up, this being due mainly to the provision which has been so generously made for giving effect to the recommendations of the Lee Commission. It is impossible for a non-official member—unless the Finance Member comes to his rescue—to estimate with any degree of accuracy the burden which is likely to be placed on the people of Bengal as the consequence of the acceptance of the famous Lee Report. But I have a suspicion that the amount of the burden will not fall far short of a quarter of a crore in the coming year. I may mention here in passing that effect is being given to only one portion of the Report, namely, that which deals with the emoluments of the members of the higher services; but the question relating to the Indianisation of the services—by which means the Commission ought to relieve the financial burden to some extent—is to be given the go-by.

A second important cause of this deficit is to be found in public works expenditure, which shows an increase of 22¾ lakhs over the revised estimates for the current year. Evidently, the time-honoured policy of brick and mortar now looms larger than ever before the eyes of our administrators. Of course, whether such policy is justifiable or not in the present financial circumstances of the province or in view of the needs of the really important departments is another matter.

Among the minor causes of the deficit is the expenditure on such departments as General Administration, Excise, Police, and Ports and Pilotage. It seems strange that in an insanitary province like Bengal, the head "Public Health" shows an actual decrease. Has it been found impossible to effect economy by any other means than by reducing the grants for public health purposes and the expenses in connection with epidemic diseases?

The provision of two and a half lakhs made for rural water-supply is one of the welcome features of the Budget. But the amount is insignificant in comparison with the needs of a population of 46 lakhs, and looks ridiculously small when contrasted with the grant of two lakhs and 87 thousand for surfacing maidan roads with tar-macadam.

An additional grant of a lakh and a half has been made for primary education, for which small mercy the children of the province seeking the benefits of literacy will thank the Finance Member. A sum of 2 lakhs is provided for the Calcutta University. The assurance given

by the Finance Member that Government is prepared to give assistance is welcome, although his view that the extent to which Government assistance will be required " will not exceed two lakhs " is not, I am afraid, founded on facts. I should like to point out that the total grant made to the Calcutta University for the coming year is smaller than that of the current year. But we need have no apprehensions as to the future, for His Excellency the Governor gave the " pledge " the other day that " interests of the University, financial or otherwise," would not suffer. I may be permitted to make a suggestion in this connection. In past years, the University has had to depend, to a considerable extent, on the grants proposed by Government and voted by this Council, and such grants have varied in amount from year to year. This fact has placed the University in a difficult position, and has often given rise to excessive optimism in the minds of some and undue pessimism in those of others. What I suggest is that a substantial recurring grant be made to the University so as to place it above want, and that the amount of the grant be fixed by an Act of the Legislature. The great advantage of the proposal I make will be that the work of the University will not be hampered by doubt, uneasiness and uncertainty: the authorities of that institution will know exactly the amount of assistance they can expect from the State funds and regulate their expenditure accordingly

The Finance Member asserts that he has not been " backward in paying attention to the wants of the transferred departments ." But, unfortunately, his claim to our gratitude is not substantiated by the figures of his Budget. In the revised estimates for the current year, the expenditure on the reserved side amounts to 6 crores and 60 lakhs, against 3 crores and 37 lakhs on the transferred side. In the Budget for the ensuing year, the amounts of expenditure of the two halves of Government are 7 crores and 46 lakhs and 3 crores and 88 lakhs, respectively. Thus the same proportion of 66 and 34 per cent. for the reserved and transferred departments respectively is maintained. But, perhaps, the Finance Member is not to blame. It pleases the vanity of officialdom to think that the reserved subjects for which they are responsible are twice as important as the transferred subjects for which Ministers are—or are supposed to be—responsible. It will, perhaps, be long before the bureaucracy is able to rid itself of the notion that the nation-preserving and nation-building departments of governmental activity are only half as important as the maintenance of law and order.

I have dealt with some of the silent features of the Budget. The estimated deficts is a huge one. But how is it proposed to meet it? The answer is simple—by drawing upon the balance. The method may be an easy one, but is it unjustifiable? I desire here to enter my emphatic protest against the policy of frittering away the balance. I suggested last year that after keeping a certain amount, say 50 lakhs,

as a reserve, the rest of the balance should be set apart so as to form the nucleus of a Public Health Fund, to which should be added all surpluses which might accrue in prosperous years. I repeat this suggestion once more. A large balance is always a source of temptation to the spending departments, and its demoralising influence is felt in the present decision of the Government to indulge in wasteful expenditure. The balance is the result of economy, retrenchment and fresh taxation, and it would be a pity if the money obtained from the poor and saved by starving the nation-building departments, were thrown away. It is bad finance to meet ordinary expenditure from the balance in a normal year, and I would strongly urge the Finance Member to desist from the course he proposes to adopt. Sanitation is the most urgent need of the province, and it will help to rehabilitate the faith of the people in the *bona fides* of Government if a serious attempt is made to tackle this problem in the way I suggest

There is one subject in the speech of the Hon'ble Mr. Donald with which I and all my colleagues in this Council are in whole-hearted agreement, namely, his plea for the remission of the provincial contribution and for the revision of the Meston Settlement. As regards the remission, I do not think much argument will be needed to convince the Government of India of its justice and necessity. But I hope an earnest effort will be made to persuade the Central Government to part with the proceeds of the export duty on jute, to which this province may justly prefer a claim. However much the Government and the people of Bengal may differ on other matters, they are absolutely united in the demand for the revision of the iniquitous Meston Award, without which it will never be possible to place the administration of the province on a sound financial basis.

Babu HEMANTA KUMAR SARKAR: Sir, we are thankful to the Hon'ble the Finance Member for his graciousness in not proposing any fresh taxation this year to make up the deficit budget. We admire him for the tough fight he has put up against the iniquitous Meston Settlement. Bengal was robbed of 20 out of 27½ crores of her total revenue by the Imperial Government. The award was made on an exaggerated view of the taxable capacity of Bengal and her low scale of expenditure. Lord Meston has himself admitted that Bengal is justly entitled to the entire jute export revenue. Even after the remission of 63 lakhs for provincial contribution, there will still be a deficit of 26 lakhs in the coming year which have to be drawn from the opening balances.

The World War devoured all extra money and all schemes of development were held in abeyance. The war over, the nightmare of Reforms sat tight on the breast of Bengal.

We learn from the Hon'ble the Finance Member our peculiar financial position has been emphasised from the very beginning of the Reforms. The Joint Parliamentary Committee commented on the peculiar

financial difficulties of Bengal and made a recommendation in our favour. The Government of India themselves admitted in 1921 that even with every economy Bengal must have a deficit of Rs. 120 lakhs. The remission of 63 lakhs reduced, but was far from wiping out, that deficit.

Three new taxation Bills were passed in one single year by the Bengal Legislative Council. The members of the Council thought, when they passed these Bills in 1922, and that was also the assurance given by the Government of Bengal, that 70 per cent. of the additional income derived from this new taxation would be spent for the development departments. But these hopes have not materialised.

The confession of Lord Meston, the recommendation of the Joint Parliamentary Committee, the admission of the Government of India, the application of the retrenchment axe, the action of the Hon'ble the Finance Member, the co-operation of the last Council and the translation of our late Finance Secretary to the Olympic heights of the Imperial capital have not moved the iron heart of fate. We stand exactly where we were, perhaps in a worse position than during the pre-war days. Unless some provision is made in the Budget to snatch away the magic lamp from *Aladdin*, no improvement seems to be possible and with the prospect of a Lee loot forced on India every now and then, the solution seems to be far remote.

Like the modern Hindu described by the late poet D. L. Roy as queer amalgam of *Sasadhar*, Huxley and goose, the Budget presented by the Hon'ble the Finance Member is a queer amalgam of mathematical calculation, bureaucratic tact and hypnotic hoax. As a result of the adverse vote of the Council last year, the Government could save much money and they "saved much paper and many printing charges" as a consequence of the Council's refusal to provide funds for the appointment of Ministers. The transferred departments without the Ministers have survived and if His Excellency the Governor takes a little more pains to administer them temporarily for another year and a half, much more money of the poor tax-payer can be saved.

The guardians of law and order have been starved this year and the total increase of expenditure is only two lakhs and a half. The Criminal Investigation Department has got three lakhs. On the fateful 25th of October last it was proved that the existing secret police was not competent. They succeeded neither in capturing arms nor incriminating documents in course of the numerous house-searches all over Bengal. So fresh blood should be introduced in the department. Why did they fail to discover the arms imported from Honolulu, Hottentot, Alaska, Nebraska, Kamaskatcha, Lopatka and other known and unknown countries? The Hon'ble the Member in charge of the Department should enact a piece of legislation making the black art of causing the disappearance of firearms at the approach of the police an offence to be punished by capital sentence, and we promise him our whole-hearted

support. But I fix the responsibility for this failure on the three or four officials who alone knew what was afoot ten minutes before the Chief Executive Officer of Calcutta was arrested. If they had only taken the police into confidence and told them what they wanted to have, our officers would have proved equal to the black magicians. I accuse the veterans of the Intelligence Branch not to have taken the initiative themselves. There were enough revolvers and cartridges, some of which might have been spared to unconsciously slip into the dens of the revolutionaries. The cooly culprits who attempted at wrecking the Lieutenant-Governor's train at Naraingarh in the Partition days were promptly brought to justice by the inventing genius of the Police. I believe that high efficiency has decreased because of our not giving them iron-cots and mosquito nets to sleep soundly at night.

The conduct of Subhas Bose was really suspicious. He belonged to the Most Noble Order of the Steel Frame, but this fellow had the cheek to give up a position in the Heaven-born service, where if he wanted to learn violence he might have availed himself of a thousand opportunities "to shoot and shoot well" like the great general of the Julianwalla Bagh fame. Instead of sending people to jail for selling *khaddar* at broad daylight, he himself went to jail. What was he, a Puritan bachelor, doing with Rs. 1,500 a month? Why did he hire a big house, when his own house was big enough to accommodate a hundred people? Surely to shelter revolutionaries and finance the revolutionary organisations like the South Calcutta Sevak Samiti and the South Calcutta Orphanage: that big house must have some underground chambers where he used to manufacture bombs at dead of night with the help of a formula stolen, perhaps, from the laboratory of Sir P. C. Roy, and without the knowledge of his political chief and the dearest and nearest ones of his life! I hope the police will make another search underground and see if my inference is correct.

There is one happy feature, however, in the Police Budget that money has been provided for barracks for some married constables. Let us hope some provision will be made in a Supplementary Budget for the marriage of their daughters.

There has been a provision of Rs. 1,92,000 for Ministers which is liable to change, as the Hon'ble the Finance Member has stated, should there be any alteration in the number of Ministers. There is no statutory limit for His Excellency the Governor to the number of Ministers he can choose. May I humbly suggest following the Government resolution on Ministers' salaries passed by an overwhelming majority the other day that His Excellency may choose some 64 Ministers with Rs. 1,000 per annum. Judging from the applications for ministership it may even be hoped that smaller salaries will procure good Ministers, some of whom may pay from their own pocket a sum to make up the deficit in our Budget. But I warn the Government

that these Ministers should not be in charge of Excise and Public Works Department—the two most lucrative departments in the whole Secretariat. Provision for the maintenance of persons restrained and confined in the jails under the provision of Ordinance I of 1924 is too inadequate. Two of the members of this House have been favoured with sinecures under this. God knows whether any more will follow.

Government has rightly allotted Rs. 3 lakhs for the starved teachers in non-Government secondary schools, and they have cut at the root of all evils. Hunger breeds revolution and discontented teachers may be the greatest of sedition mongers. I hope the grant will be increased and made recurring.

The sum of Rs. 83,000 for Circle Officers seem to be a paltry sum. These useful officers carry the banner of the bureaucracy to village and force village self-government through the unwilling throats of the rustic.

A sum of Rs. 25,000 has been allotted to eradicate water-hyacinth. I hope the proposal of requisitioning steamer to go into the affected areas and discharge steam and kill the pest will be tried by the Government and the money will be usefully spent.

A further sum of Rs. 2,87,000 has been provided to carry on the improvements of the roads on the Maidan. When they are surfaced with tar-macadam, the gaping villagers with whose money this improvement has been effected will die comfortably on the smooth surface being run over by motor cars of their temporal lords.

The Medical Budget has three lakhs in excess of the revised figure. The Hon'ble the Member says that lunatic asylums are responsible for this. I believe for every increase that influence from the moon is responsible and we should have our Council Chamber erected in a part of that cool place, where a Budget like this can be given proper consideration and saved from wreckers.

Babu TARAKNATH MUKERJEA: As the youngest of all the members here I labour under some disadvantage, I would, therefore, at the very outset crave your indulgence for a while.

I cannot congratulate the Hon'ble the Finance Member as the Budget, although it shows a nominal surplus, is really in fact a deficit one according to whether the provincial contribution of Rs. 63 lakhs to the Government of India is not or is taken into account.

At the very outset I must confess that I am unable to deal with this Budget fully. The subject is too varied and far too serious to be even nibbled at within such a short period at our disposal.

The Budget while providing the police and the superior services with all the luxuries which modern civilisation has invented, has hopelessly neglected the cause of the nation-building departments.

The estimated expenditure under the head "Police" has been increased by over Rs. 8 lakhs and as the Hon'ble the Finance Member has himself said this increase is due to strengthening the staff of the Criminal Investigation Department to cope with the very large increase in the work of the department.

Then, again, there is a proposal for floating a loan of Rs. 8,50,000 but not for helping the cause of education, sanitation, village industry or agriculture, etc., of the nation-building departments, but for building houses for the Calcutta Police.

The provision for the rural water-supply in the entire province has been increased from Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 2,50,000 but at the same time the Hon'ble the Finance Member has taken care to reduce the total grants for public health purposes by more than an equal amount and only 1 lakh has been granted for the improvement and extension of panchayati union schools in Bengal.

After so much has been said on the Budget by my previous speakers and specially after the most brilliant speech of Dr. Pramathanath Banerjea and most interesting speech of Mr. Hemanta Kumar Sarkar I think I should not waste the time of the House by repeating the same things once again. So I shall confine my observations on the fate of my own district.

I am here to represent the views of my constituency and I take this opportunity to discharge my pious duty to submit before the House the grievances of my constituency.

No doubt the Budget is a very disappointing one so far as my district is concerned.

As the result of the retrenchment the Chinsura Agricultural School has been nipped in the bud without giving it a fair chance and opportunity to prove its utility.

No special provision has been made for the re-excavation of the river Saraswati, on which depends the fate of thousands of the people of my district and although the matter has been brought to the notice of the authorities times without number no proper step has yet been taken.

The river Saraswati being one of the main outlets of water in the district and as it has been totally silted up, no water can pass out to the Ganges, thus leaving thousands of acres of lands totally under water over 6 to 8 feet deep for over four months during the year.

As the result of this not only the poor cultivators are totally deprived of any crop but it has also rendered the entire locality very unhealthy and malaria, kala-azar, etc., are doing quite a havoc there.

Then, again, no provision has been made for the flood-relief in that unfortunate malaria-stricken subdivision Arambagh.

It is really surprising to note that in spite of the very strong protest of its people, both official and non-official, the Assistant Surgeon has been replaced by a Sub-Assistant Surgeon from the Arambagh Hospital—although a subdivisional town and a place notorious for malaria.

One who has the good or rather I should call it a bad fortune to go to Arambagh—not to speak of other places in the interior—will at once say without any hesitation that, in fact, it is a land of water with depopulated villages and malaria-stricken villagers.

It is admitted on all hands that the political situation is very serious and that constructive statesmanship demands that at this critical moment the Government should show more anxiety to placate the sentiments of the people and thereby to consolidate their own power.

As a matter of fact the Hon'ble the Finance Member has exhausted his resources to convince us that he has done his best to serve the nation-building departments and thereby to outwit us; but he has failed and hopelessly failed.

Ours is an agricultural country and the people who are really the backbone of the country cannot be contented unless some material improvement is done to them.

I am firmly of opinion that merely the constitutional Reform scheme, even if freed of all its objectionable features, will, by its operation, succeed in allaying far less in eradicating the present discontent.

The present discontent, apart from the political sense which is the legitimate outcome of our contact with western institutions, is to a very great extent due to the poverty of the middle classes which has reached such gigantic proportions as cannot but prove a terrible evil and a real danger to the State.

With refined notions of living engendered by contact with western civilisation, but with no capital to invest in agriculture, trade or industry, our middle classes now find themselves destitute of the means of procuring even the bare necessaries of life. If the feeling of desparation finds occasional vent in fanatical crimes, true statesmanship should cope with the evil by trying to fulfil the primary duty of the State, both on political as well as on humanitarian grounds, by making every endeavour to remove this distress first. I am firmly convinced that the only way to eradicate the discontent and unrest in India is to make provision for removing this economic distress of the masses and to satisfy the growing aspiration for political rights. History has proved that repression was never proved successful in allaying, far less in eradicating the spirit of unrest in any part of the world.

In conclusion, I must frankly admit that the four years of this Reformed regime have not in any way been able to ameliorate the condition of the country. Our ambitions with which we have come here and our high hopes have all been dashed to the ground. Blame how much you might to our lack of funds, but there can also be no denying of the lack of grit, lack of energy and lack of initiative in those who are custodians of the public funds. With these few words, Sir, I submit before the House my humble observations.

Mr. F. E. JAMES: The Budget this year is, with one exception, a somewhat depressing document. I take it that this is due to three reasons. First of all the failure to provide fresh taxation; secondly, the failure to effect further retrenchment; and thirdly, the incidence of the provincial contribution to the Imperial Government. With regard to the fresh taxation question, I understand that there is no possibility under the present circumstances of increasing the taxation. With regard to the incidence of the provincial contribution, that question is still problematic but at the best if the contribution were remitted it will only give us a normal surplus of Rs. 30,00,000. There still remains the question of further retrenchment. The Retrenchment Committee's recommendation with respect to the reserved departments was a retrenchment of 98 lakhs. Up to the present a sum of 11½ lakhs has been accepted. I would like to hear whether this is the last word of Government upon this question of retrenchment. The Committee was a responsible one. It was a very weighty one. No one expected that all the recommendations which were made would be accepted. But to accept only about 12 per cent. does seem to me a most disappointing result. I trust that this is not the Government's last word on the subject and I hope that further retrenchment will be possible in the near future. I would like to refer to one or two welcome items in the Budget. In the first place there is the increase of 7 lakhs in the Education Budget which should be heartily welcomed by this House. Under that item there are three things to which I would refer in particular. There is the increase in the pay of secondary school teachers. That is a proposal which all sections of the House should warmly approve. Any one who knows anything about the conditions and status of many of the teachers in secondary schools will welcome heartily the proposed increase of their pay.

The other point to which I would like to refer is the grant to the Entally Orphanage. I would commend this very warmly to the consideration of Government. One of the important points to be noted in this connection is that the authorities responsible for this Orphanage have guaranteed to raise half the necessary amount and are only asking Government to give them the other half. Those who know anything about the Catholic community know that this community is not one of

the wealthiest. Therefore, this endeavour on their part is a commendable one and deserves the warm support of all sections of the House.

The other point to which I would like to refer is the grant to the C. M. S. High School in Kidderpore. Here, again, is a most worthy object, of special interest to the Muhammadan members of this Council, and I would commend it also to the support of the House.

The second item to which I would like to refer is a comparatively small one. Underlying this item is the promised acceptance by the Government of a very interesting and welcome principle—I refer to the provision of a tube well in the Hijli Jail. Those interested in the welfare of juvenile offenders will welcome the Hon'ble Sir Hugh Stephenson's reference to a new policy for their treatment. I take that this is the first step and will be followed by other steps. I would appeal to all members in this House whose time is not wholly occupied by obstruction to give some attention to this most important matter—the child-welfare of the province.

I would now pass on to two criticisms in regard to the provisions in the Budget. In the first place, I notice that under the head "Industries," there is no provision made for the Calcutta Technical School. It will be remembered by the members of the House that land was purchased, building completed and equipped in the winter of 1923-24 at a cost of about Rs. 11 lakhs. The Governing Body, representing Government, municipality and employers' interests, have, I understand refused to take over this place till the Government have signified its intention of subsidising the school for a definite period. I understand that the Corporation is on the way if they have not already —

Mr. G. S. DUTT: May I rise to a point of personal explanation? This statement is not correct. It is not a fact that the Governing Body have refused to take over the institution.

Mr. F. E. JAMES: I stand corrected, Sir. But it is obvious that it is not possible for the Governing Body to take over the school till the money is available. I understand that the Corporation is on the way to sanctioning a considerable amount and all that now remains for Government is to sanction a recurring grant for a definite period.

The Report of the Unemployment Committee recently issued contains the following statement:—

After a discussion extending over many years pressing for the establishment of a technological institute in Calcutta we note that the Government of Bengal has built a technical school for the theoretical training of engineering apprentices. This school has been built in such a way that it is capable of expansion. In our opinion it is of utmost importance that the Governing Body of this school should be supplied with the necessary recurring grants from the Government and the Calcutta Corporation to enable them to open the school at an early date.

There is a definite need for a policy on the part of Government in regard to the establishment of a Board of Control of Technical Education, workshops or trade schools for the mufassal, and a Technological Institute using the Calcutta Technical School as the basis from which expansion can be made. We have been told already that the question of unemployment is very acute indeed. I am not one of those who regard technical education the sole panacea for unemployment, if there be any panacea at all. But I do believe that though a definite measure of support for an institution like the proposed Technical Institute will not solve the problem, it will help by giving a practical turn to educational policy in Bengal.

The second criticism which I would like to offer is in connection with excise. To begin with, I may say frankly that I do not like the excise business at all, and I do not share the Hon'ble the Finance Member's complacency in regard to the excise revenue in this Budget. He claims that the consumption of opinion has decreased by nearly 50 per cent. I acknowledge that; but the number of shops in which opium and other drugs are sold has not similarly decreased. There are 79 drug shops in Calcutta and that number has remained stationary for the last five years. The Indian Government's argument recently at Geneva has been that opium is largely used for semi-medical purposes owing to the scarcity of doctors in the rural districts. A surprisingly large proportion of the opium which is consumed in India is consumed in Calcutta and its environs where that argument does not hold good. With regard to drink, I do not think that the position is altogether satisfactory from the point of view of one who is interested in this matter from a social aspect. Licenses of various kinds granted for the consumption of liquor and *tari* in Calcutta, Howrah and Bally have increased from 393 in 1919-20 to 494 in 1923-24. This increase occurs in the case of foreign liquor only. There seems to be a need for an inquiry into this with a view to reducing the consumption of foreign liquor by those communities which are not accustomed to take it. Moreover, we find that while the consumption of country liquor in the same areas declined in five years from 1920 from a little under 3 lakhs to about 2 lakhs of gallons, a reduction of about 30 per cent., the number of shops was only reduced by about 5 per cent. Moreover, there has recently been an extension of closing hours in various industrial areas.

There is one other point to which I would like to draw attention in regard to excise. The Government in 1921 accepted a resolution of this Council for the application of the principle of local option to municipal areas as one of the measures for the restriction of consumption of intoxicating liquors and drugs. I do not know whether anything has been done along that line up to the present. The Government policy on excise was laid down in an official *communiqué* issued in August 1921, the substance of which is as follows:—

It accepts the reality of the growing Indian sentiment against the liquor and drug habit. It seeks to minimise temptation for those who do not drink, and to discourage excess among those who do. It aims at securing a minimum consumption. It is prepared to pay due regard to public opinion and to subordinate all considerations of revenue to the promotion of the moral well-being of the community. It imposes as high a rate of duty as possible without unduly encouraging illicit methods. At the same time the reasonable requirements of moderate consumers are not to be overlooked.

No one but a rabid prohibitionist—and I am not one of those—would reasonably quarrel with that declared sentiment; but that there is a discrepancy between that statement and the recent note of the Commissioner of Excise to the Licensing Board. The note is as follows:—

It is the intention of Government to provide reasonable facilities to meet the requirements of both liquor and drugs. At the same time the arrangements should not be such as to put temptation in the way of those who would not ordinarily indulge in intoxicants.

There is a very distinct discrepancy. In the first statement the emphasis is upon the subordination of all considerations of revenue to the promotion of the moral well-being of the community; in the second statement it appears that the Commissioner's job is to provide reasonable facilities to meet the requirements of moderate consumers. There seems to be a discrepancy and this apparently or real discrepancy—I do not claim to know which it is—is undoubtedly disconcerting to the minds of many who are interested in this question. I do feel that there is a growing public sentiment with regard to the excise policy and I believe that if it is not neglected too long, it and the Government's declared intention as laid down in the *communiqué* of 1921 can be harmonised in a definite and concrete policy which will serve the moral well-being of the people with the minimum dislocation of the provincial revenues.

Having offered those two tentative criticisms—and I hope to have made, at any rate, some constructive criticisms—I only wish to say in conclusion that I trust that this Council will not repeat the mistakes of last year and that all sections of the House will endeavour in the new atmosphere in which we find ourselves to criticise the Budget constructively, and not destructively, and to try and produce something from the discussions which will redound to the credit of the House and at the same time be of great value to the people of the province.

Rai HARENDRANATH CHAUDHURI: While we are obliged to the Hon'ble Mr. Donald for his endeavours to present the Budget for 1925-26 with a clear statement—while we must thank him for his offer to supply further informations regarding Budget matters, we are sorry we can neither congratulate him for the Budget before us nor ourselves upon the financial position and outlook of this province.

Now what has come to be the financial position of Bengal after the Reforms? It has been described in a nutshell by Mr. Donald in the following words:—

The first year's working, *i.e.*, 1921-22 ended in a deficit of Rs. 1,70,58,000, and but for the remission we have enjoyed during the past three years and despite economy, retrenchment and taxation we should have been in deficit every year in 1922-23 to the extent of nearly 40 lakhs, in 1923-24 Rs. 24½ lakhs, in the current year Rs. 26½ lakhs, and if we do not secure a further remission during the coming year, we should without incurring any new expenditure at all be in a deficit to the extent of Rs. 30½ lakhs.

These words in the opening and the closing portions of his Budget speech sum up with admirable brevity the financial history of the province during the last quinquennium—the lustrum of financial crisis ushered by the Reforms—Reforms which it is urged Bengal should be most anxious to save and conserve. If bankruptcy means responsible Government certainly it is the most progressive realisation of responsible Government that can ever be achieved. Bengal, the leading province of India, which yields the largest proportion of revenue to the Central Government is reduced to the position of the charity boy of the Government of India looking up with folded hands to Delhi for relief and succour. Such is the result of the Meston Settlement—the settlement against which our Government repeats every year its half-hearted protests in vain and which we are sure it will continue to do till the Greek Kalends, at any rate till 1929 when probably Bengal will be called upon to prove how best it has learnt to run nation-building departments without funds.

Now coming to the figures as given in the present financial statement relating to the past, present and the ensuing year—the first thing that strikes even a casual observer is the actual receipts for the year 1923-24. How different are they from the original, I mean, the sanctioned estimates for 1923-24—how remarkably poorer are they even than the revised estimates for that year—showing on the whole as they do a miscalculation of receipts to the extent of about 16 lakhs and under Heads VII Stamps and IXA Scheduled Taxes alone something like 11½ lakhs less than the revised estimates for that year. And if the total figure does not show anything more than defective realisation by 8·73 lakhs it is because receipts under Head V Land Revenue were better by 7·52 lakhs. I venture, therefore, to repeat the warning which I gave in my speech on the Budget for 1923-24 that Stamps of which the sale has been adversely affected by increased taxation—will neither yield 330 lakhs in the present nor 340 lakhs in the coming year, and so far as the total revenue receipts (exclusive of Loans) are concerned, it will be difficult to realise even the sanctioned estimates for the current year, *viz.*, Rs. 10,29,25,000. I venture also to remark that the Budget estimate of receipts for 1925-26 under Head IXA Scheduled Taxes will hardly prove to be a correct one.

There is another observation which is forced on us regarding the receipt side of the Budget by the Hon'ble the Finance Member's remarks about the excise revenue. Recently, Sir, year after year our Government is making much of the fixed-fee system. Its introduction may have yielded better revenue but is it likely to achieve any great result in checking and ultimately prohibiting drink? It may have made drink a little too costly a thing for the poor but it is equally open to Lord Chesterfield's famous indictment in the House of Lords, *viz.*, "would not such a tax be wicked and scandalous, because it would imply an indulgence to all those who would pay the tax?" Mr. Donald has quoted certain figures to show that the result of the excise policy of the Government has been to restrict the facilities for supply and to reduce the consumption of excisable commodities. I submit, it is not. It is neither the object of the Government policy even to gradually prohibit the use of drink and opium nor their system can effectively reduce or is, as a matter of fact, securing less consumption. The Hon'ble the Finance Member has quoted certain figures. Let me quote certain others, none the less striking, to show how ineffectual their policy is and how, to causes other than the Government policy and system the recent progress in temperance was due. Take the consumption of country spirit which yields more than 54 per cent. of the total demand. It was, as the Hon'ble the Member says, 822,971 gallons in 1913-14 but 755,285 gallons in 1919-20 and came down to 593,356 gallons in 1922-23. Will the Hon'ble the Member be pleased to explain how was it that while in the seven years between 1913-14 to 1919-20 there was a fall in consumption to the extent of about 67½ thousand gallons only, there was the remarkable decrease of about 162 thousand gallons in the three years between 1919-20 and 1922-23. How is it that in spite of the potent Government policy and effective fixed-fee system "the total consumption of country spirit in the Presidency" is again on the increase and "amounted to 621,183 gallons" in 1923-24 "as compared with 593,356 gallons in the preceding year (*i.e.*, 1922-23) showing an increase of 27,827 gallons" in one single year? Is it not remarked with a note of evident Government satisfaction in the very report from which the Hon'ble the Member has quoted: "On the whole consumption has increased owing to better supervision and to the absence of the non-co-operation movement" (Excise Report for 1923-24)? So far as regards country liquors. Do the figures showing consumption of other excisable commodities support the Government view? Again, I submit, no. Take the consumption of foreign liquors. In 1923-24, 811,095 gallons of ale and fermented liquors and 693,915 gallons of spirits and liquors were cleared from the custom houses as against 759,297 gallons of ale, beer, etc., and 653,380 gallons of spirits and liquors—"The total quantity of *ganja* consumed in the presidency amounted to 1,665 maunds 19 seers" in 1923-24 "as compared with 1,588 maunds

21 seers in 1922-23, showing an increase of 76 maunds and 38 seers". And not only consumption but even cultivation of this precious crop increased, the area sanctioned in 1923-24 being 2,900 bighas. Similarly the consumption of *bhang* and *charas*, the most injurious of the hemp drugs, also increased. If the consumption of opium during the year was 997 maunds 37 seers in 1923-24 as compared with 1,006 maunds 16 seers in the previous year—well it was not due to any want of encouragement, for consumption increased in 19 out of 27 districts and decrease in consumption in none of the 8 remaining districts did exceed 10 per cent. Moreover, nine new shops were opened in six different districts, probably to restrict sale and co-operate with "reasonable temperance movement." A Government which is not willing to prohibit and thus give up the small revenue from *charas* in spite of an expected better receipts of 5 lakhs under excise cannot certainly pretend to be sympathetic towards the cause of temperance.

Coming to the expenditure side two things attract our notice at the outset—first the large increase of about 85 lakhs under non-voted items which means, if it means anything at all, how a large portion of the Budget has been placed beyond the vote of the Council, and secondly how even in the present circumstances the financial situation is being exploited more to the detriment of the nation-building departments than the reserved ones. Compare the progress of expenditure during the last four years since when the provincial Budget was balanced by triple taxation. Even in this short race it is transferred departments which have lagged behind. Though the actuals of expenditure are not shown under separate heads—Reserved and Transferred—yet in their absence we can get a clue to it if we simply compare the revised estimates of expenditure for the year 1922-23 with the Budget estimate for 1925-26:—

Reserved Subjects.	Rs.	Transferred Subjects.	Rs.
Budget Estimates for 1925-26 ..	7,46,14,000	Budget Estimates for 1925-26 ..	3,88,39,000
Revised Estimates for 1922-23 ..	6,36,93,000	Revised Estimates for 1922-23 ..	3,45,57,000
	1,09,21,000		42,82,000

This shows that whereas in the last four years expenditure on the reserved side has increased by 109 lakhs, the expenditure on the transferred side has received an addition of only 42·82 lakhs in four years or in other words the progress of expenditure on the transferred side is at the rate of 10·70 lakhs only per annum as compared with 27·30 lakhs per annum on the reserved side and this, again, on the supposition that all the provisions for increased expenditure which have been proposed on the transferred side are not mere eyewash but will be actually utilised and the inevitable plea of "no schemes" will not—

as I am afraid—arbe. Yet the Hon'ble the Finance Member will assure the Council that the Government is "attending to the needs of the transferred departments." Even, to-day, with the much advertised "proposed new expenditure" the estimates of expenditure on the transferred side represent 33·3 of the total expenditure (exclusive of loan transactions) as against 35 per cent of Sir John Kerr's Budget. And the Government says "we have not been backward in attending to the wants of the transferred departments."

Attending to the wants of the transferred departments indeed! Therefore, the direct grants to non-Government primary schools on the reserved side have increased from 1·33 lakhs in 1921-22 to 4·19 lakhs in the revised estimates for 1924-25, while the direct grants to non-Government primary schools on the transferred side remained, so far as the revised estimates for 1924-25 show, where they were in 1921-22, *viz.*, stationary at 17 and odd lakhs—therefore, it is, Sir, that the total estimates for the coming year on the reserved side of education is going to be increased by 9 per cent. on the revised estimate for 1924-25, while the total Budget estimate for education on the transferred side, *i.e.*, for education of the whole province as it were, including the grants to the Universities, is going to be increased by 5·75 per cent. only on the revised figure for the current year. They are attending to the needs of the transferred departments. Therefore, the proposed grant to the hospitals and dispensaries in 1925-26 must be the same as it was in 1921-22 and less than the actuals for 1922-23 and therefore, the proposed grant for medical purposes for 1925-26 is less than the actual expenditure for 1922-23 and same as the Budget estimate for the current year—therefore, it is, Sir, that the current year's estimate for grant for public health purposes can safely be cut down by 2 lakhs and less money can be budgetted for expenses in connection with epidemic diseases. Malaria and Kala-azar may continue to spread havoc but the revised estimate for the current year for anti-malarial and anti-kala-azar measures can, they think, safely be reduced by half so far as the Budget for the coming year is concerned; and the anti-malarial projects like the Nowisunthi schemes—the boasts of Sir Surendra Nath Banerjea—must be kept in abeyance and no sum can be contributed towards their further prosecution. So much "attention" pray, a little less, may well be the cry of the afflicted millions of Bengal.

But attention has been bestowed and really bestowed according to the best traditions of the bureaucratic Government on the alleged needs of the reserved and the favoured departments. Administration must be carried down to the ground, therefore circle officers are to be appointed involving a recurring expenditure of Rs. 83,000. The steel frame must be strengthened and kept in good temper and therefore lakhs and lakhs—the Finance Department's modest calculation is

7·25 lakhs—must be found for giving effect to the recommendations of the Lee Commission. Police must have 2 or 3 lakhs more just to make rule by Ordinance possible. Did the Retrenchment Committee recommend a net reduction of 34½ lakhs upon the Police Budget for 1922-23? Well, those recommendations are to be honoured by budgeting for the next year the same expenditure as was actually incurred in 1922-23. In his enthusiasm to support the new taxation proposals in 1922-23 Sir Surendra Nath Banerjea asked the members of the Council to pass the taxation Bills and thus to help the raising of a loan for financing anti-malarial operations. Hardly could the veteran Knight imagine then that a loan will be started but not for any anti-malarial scheme—not for saving the people "from the dreadful and appalling mortality" but for police buildings—for the advancement of law and order.

So far as regards the matters and provisions in the Budget. But before I conclude I should like to deal with the form in which a particular and important portion of the Budget is presented—I mean the Irrigation Budget. This portion, no doubt, bears an improved appearance this time but what we want is not simply improved appearance—but more information—more matters, greater details. Even the "maintenance and repair" charges which were mentioned works by works in the last Budget under Revenue Head XIII do not appear this time. I for one, Sir, cannot really understand why this Irrigation Budget cannot be presented in a more intelligible way. There are two revenue heads relating to this department—Revenue Heads XIII and XIV—why cannot the receipts from the different works and projects coming under these heads be shown separately—especially those (under Head XIII) realised from commercial projects and services? Why cannot the extension and improvement, maintenance and repair charges be shown separately for separate works? Why cannot the establishment charges be given in detail in the civil Budget estimates and the principle on which they are divided *pro rata* be clearly stated in any portion of the Budget? The Retrenchment Committee was of opinion that "the establishment charges of this department are unduly high and require investigation." How are the members of the Council to examine, far less scrutinise, them unless they are given in details? If you are afraid of unduly loading the financial statement, why not place before the Council a separate financial statement relating to the Irrigation Department as an appendix to the general financial statement. So long as more details are not given and more informations vouchsafed—no member can reasonably be expected to vote—and vote intelligently and conscientiously—on the Irrigation Budget.

Mr. K. C. RAY CHAUDHURI: I have listened with great interest to the eloquent speech delivered by Sir Provash Chunder Mitter, the leader of the liberal party, yesterday. His attack on the Government

over the thrice told tale of the Meston Award, *viz.*, our annual contribution of Rs. 63 lakhs to Imperial Revenue need not be taken seriously. In fact, the Finance Member reminded us the other day in his financial statement that every possible step was taken by his department to secure a permanent remission of this contribution. Sir, I have no intention of defending the Secretary of State or the Government of India in their persistent refusal to revise the Meston Award so far as Bengal is concerned, but I believe their refusal is not altogether unjustified, for here in this province of "Golden Bengal" agricultural resources have been taxed to their utmost capacity but the major portion of this taxation—thanks to the Cornwallis land settlement—went to the pockets of those who have no legal obligation to spend a pie for the improvement of the resources on which they depend for their lordly style of living. I shall give some statistics taken from the Cess Report of 1899-1900 before the partition— the collection of zamindars from raiyats according to official figures amounts to 16½ crores of rupees and revenue paid by the zamindars amount approximately to 4 crores of rupees; in other words the Government had to pay to the land contractors, I mean no disrespect to the plutocracy of our landlords, the sum of 12½ crores of rupees to collect 4 crores—a very fine business, indeed, established by John Company who knew more about indigo, tea and Manchester goods than the values of land.

The promoters of the permanent settlement agreed to pay 10 per cent. of the exactions from the raiyats to the contractors and the Government to get 90 per cent. At this rate the contractors or the zamindars were to have received only 40 lakhs, *viz.*, 10 per cent. of 4 crores and not 12½ crores of rupees which has gone to their pockets now. To my mind Lord Meston, the veteran ex-Finance Member, the author of what is known as the Meston Award had the idea that Bengal under the Reform scheme and public-spirited Legislators would make a serious effort to modify the permanent settlement without resorting to confiscation and readjust the proportion of taxation of our agricultural resources.

Sir, the pockets of the Bengal peasantry have been emptied at the rate of nearly 10 million sterling per year or about £1,000 million sterling, 1,500 crores of rupees in the course of the last 100 years or so, and yet to our shame we cannot find funds to combat malaria, provide drinking water or primary education for the masses.

Out of nearly 47 millions, the population of Bengal, about 12 millions actually work in the field and maintain their dependants of 24 millions in addition to about 13 lakhs of rent receivers—known as zamindars, talukdars or pattidars who employ about 132,000 gomostas and muhurirs—the pack that fleeces the raiyats right and left.

The unearned average income of these thirteen lakhs of non-producing parasites—I mean no disrespect to the zamindars, I am only

discussing the system—works out approximately at Rs. 1,000 per head per annum.

I am very fond of statistics and shall have no difficulty to prove conclusively what the average income of a Bengal raiyat is. According to Government returns the area of arable land in Bengal is about 2 crores 44 lakhs of acres cultivated by about 1 crore and 14 lakhs actual cultivators. This gives an average holding of about 2 acres, *viz.*, 6 bighas per raiyat and the yield of 6 bighas is about 30 maunds of paddy (average of Bengal) the principal crop. Taking Rs. 2-8 as the average selling price the gross value *per capita* production is Rs. 75 per annum without taking into consideration risks from floods, drought, and other physiographical conditions which play havoc on the peasants. Let us assume as optimists, that these risks are partially covered by sundry incomes from secondary crops. The gross income of Rs. 75 per head is reduced to Rs. 50 after paying for bare cost of cultivation, including interest on loans and rent which I take to be Rs. 2 per bigha or Rs. 12 per holding of 2 acres. Out of this precious income of Rs. 50 a raiyat has to maintain his family, purchase imported clothing and thus pay the indirect tax of import duty, buy salt and pay salt duty, pay cess and *abwabs*, bear costs of litigation and pay stamp duty, consume drugs or country liquor and pay excise duty. It is all the time pay, pay, pay, without any semblance of protection which all payments warrant. He works from morning to evening in poverty, hunger and dirt to earn the magnificent sum of Rs. 50 a year, whereas his master and lord who neither spins nor weaves enjoys an unearned income of Rs. 1,000, *viz.*, twenty times without doing a single stroke of work.

What is the solution? I am not an idealist to suggest a single method, *viz.*, *charka* as the solution or organisation of the much-talked about village committees or the provisions for *dharmagolas* and the rest of it. To my humble mind this talk of village reform so frequently indulged by patriots to catch votes is all moonshine.

To combat the evils of landlordism no sane Government would dream of confiscation excepting in Soviet Russia. The Irish nation had the same problems to face in Ireland—where the menace to peasantry was absentee landlordism—the insecurity of land tenure and paucity of capital in the hands of peasants and the same problems confront Bengal raiyats to-day and how did they solved it in Ireland? They brought pressure until an Irish Land Act or Land Purchase Act had to be passed to enable peasants to purchase the landlords' interest in the holdings by small and gradual instalments. We have to devise a plan of this kind with modifications suitable to the conditions of this country and to the various landlaws enacted from the time of the permanent settlement.

In view of the fact that the produce of our peasants, jute, seeds or paddy can under the present condition only reach consumers after paying so many middlemen's profits. I attach much greater importance than a

Land Purchase Act to the organisation of a co-operative distribution society. It is easily done by amending the present Co-operative Credit Societies Act and making provisions for distribution, *viz.*, sale of crops, wholesale or otherwise direct to consumers, *viz.*, mills exporters in case of jute, rice and seeds and wholesale merchants in case of food-stuffs and other crops for inland trade purposes.

Had an organisation even in a loose form existed in past the loot and plunder by which jute growers, were subjected to during the War and after to the extent of hundreds of crores of rupees that went to the pocket of dealers, balers, exporters and shareholders of jute mills would probably have been partly awarded.

These distribution societies are working excellently well in Germany and Ireland, Belgium and Italy. They are known as Kartels in Germany. They are widespread and powerful—they are merely combinations of growers who produce individually but each places all its sales in the hands of a central committee which sells at a common price.

The attempts of some of our Nationalists to revive the old panchayet are reactionary. To try to teach the pauperised peasantry self-help before they learn self-assertion is useless. The village cannot be reformed because its economic basis is rotten to the core. Examine and you will find that exploitation is the cause of the chronic poverty of the peasantry. No patch work will do. How can you save the peasant from postilence by sinking a well or starting a dispensary when he dies of an epidemic disease due to undermined vitality? How can you teach the peasant co-operation when the villages are infested with money-lenders and traders with their thousand and one cunning schemes of exploitation which they carry on with the help of officials and landlords? The peasants so long they are submerged in debts, cannot possibly get fair prices for their produce.

Excessive rents and taxes imposed alike by the Government and by the landlord force him into the clutches of the usurer and land speculator—the only release is found in the slums of the industrial cities. It is necessary to go deep into the root-cause if we are all sincerely fighting for the welfare of the peasantry which constitute more than 80 per cent. of our nation. The peasants are poor because a large part of what they produce is taken away from them as rents, indirect taxes, interests and contribution. Their poverty cannot be cured unless we remove the system which sanctions exploitation of all kinds.

These strong talks will not go down with the Nationalists who have their own fancy schemes of village Reforms. I have given mine—nothing original about them, *viz.*, Land Purchase Act, and co-operative distribution of produce—the first to re-establish peasant proprietorship and the last to secure maximum returns for peasants' labour.

All these are but mere indications which point to the future progress of India's masses, India's dumb millions, who, in the last

instance, are not only the backbone of the country but constitute also its very brawn and fibre.

Babu BORODA PROSAD DEY: As these days are set apart for manuscript eloquence without any tangible result, I think I must have my share of it. But before I do so, I should like to say a few words by way of reply to the onslaught that my friend, Mr. K. C. Ray Chaudhuri has thought fit to hurl upon the devoted heads of the zemindars. My friend should remember that the present class of zemindars are not the persons, with very rare exceptions, with whom Lord Cornwallis of revered memory entered into this agreement of a permanent settlement in order to save the situation of the British administration. The present class of zemindars are mostly ordinary capitalists, who invested their savings in the land by paying the proper price for the same. So, whatever may be said either rightly or wrongly against the permanent settlement does not apply to the present class of zemindars.

Now I begin with my manuscript eloquence. In rising to make a few observations upon the Budget estimates and the general administration of the province, the first thought that is bound to occur in the minds of at least the non-official members is about the most regrettable impotence even of this Reformed Council. This has been proved to demonstration in the first instance by the fact of certification of almost all the refused grants in the current year's Budget with the only plausible justification of the interests of administration, and then by the arbitrary spiriting away of two of its members without any attempt at justification, and thus making the Council a maimed one, and, lastly, in the unauthorised passing of the Bengal Ordinance Bill into law in the teeth of the overwhelming opposition by this Council. All these are bound to have a despairing effect on the people's mind, and to turn even an ardent co-operator into a non-co-operator. So much, however, has been said and written about these matters without any appreciable impression upon the powers that be, that it is purely waste of breath to refer to them here at any length, and so I leave the subject with my strongest protest against them all. The next thought that rises in the minds of the members is about the policy of the Government behind this hard uninteresting array of figures. The effect here also is disappointment and despair, unredeemed by any hope of the future. There appear to be the same exasperating neglect for the interests of the children of the soil, and the same unjustifiable solicitude for the interests of the people other than the children of the soil, as we have learnt to associate with Government policy. Then there is the same appearance of deficit in the Budget, although the revenue from excise, the glory of the British administration, has still been put at a higher figure in the present Budget.

Leaving the Land Revenue alone, Excise and Stamp are the two main sources of Bengal's revenue; and they are also the sources of the

people's degradation and destitution. It is really unthinkable that it should be so, when it is remembered that Bengal has the monopoly of jute export, and Bengal's share of Income-tax receipts is not inconsiderable. It is, to say the least, an irony of fate that with these resources at her back Bengal has to stand as a beggar before the adamantine gate of the India Government. This brings up the question of that iniquitous Meston Settlement, which ought to be unsettled by the combined efforts of Bengal's Government and her people, if need be, through non-co-operation with the Government of India. But Bengal's Government, though conscious of the great injustice of the settlement, cannot make a strong common cause with her people against the parent Government in which they feel very much interested, so the injustice is continued. It requires no argument to prove that the Budget estimate of an administration is a sure index of the condition of the people living under the same. Judged by this test the condition of the people of Bengal is not only not satisfactory, but positively ruinous. And still attempts have always been made to add to the cost of the administration at or near the top, and no serious endeavour has ever been made to make any reduction in the proper quarters. The result has been that while the people are not only groaning under a heavy burden of taxation, but are suffering from want of adequate funds to improve their condition, the higher services are not only having easy times, but are fattening with abundance of funds.

In the concluding sentence of the Budget speech the Hon'ble the Finance Member has taken credit to himself and his Government as having done their best with the resources at their disposal. I wish the people could subscribe to this statement, and acknowledge the same conscientiously. Although it is a matter of some rejoicing that some heads in the transferred side of the Government have fared better in the present Budget under the so-called *irresponsible* auspices of His Excellency the Governor, yet looking to the whole Budget, one cannot but be struck with the stepmotherly treatment meted out between the reserved and the transferred sides, although the Hon'ble the Finance Member has tried to show the contrary. I need hardly say that the provisions proposed to be made under the heads of Public Health, of Education—both secondary and primary—of Medical in regard to mufassal dispensaries, of village water-supply, and of measures to combat Kala-azar and Malaria, in a more liberal spirit than in the current year, though not actually in figures in all cases, are certainly encouraging, and may lead the Council to bless the absence of Ministers at the time of the preparation of the Budget. But it is undeniable that when one compares the extensive need under each one of these heads with the proposed allotment, a feeling of disappointment verging upon despair comes upon him. Indeed, the proposed annual grant of Rs. 500 to a thana dispensary and of Rs. 250 to a village dispensary when the annual maintenance charges for such institutions

would come up to Rs. 2,000 and Rs. 1,000, respectively, and without any help for the capital expenditure, would mean no encouragement, for few local bodies would be able to take advantage of the grant without the help of the local rich, of whom there are very few. The grant should be half of both capital and recurring expenditure, and should include homeopathic and indigenous dispensaries. Further, the headquarters of a thana for the location of the dispensary should not always be insisted upon. There should also be provision in the Budget for subsidising medical practitioners in the mufassal. Considering the extensive spread of Kala-azar and Malaria in almost all the districts, the provision in connection with them should be much larger to be of any appreciable benefit. The question of proper drainage in municipal towns has already assumed a serious aspect, and although the proposal to supplement the cost of the Bhatpara Sewerage Scheme is indeed encouraging, steps should be taken at once to contribute one-third cost of all drainage projects within municipal towns estimated at Rs. 5,000 and over. This will be an important move.

The provisions under Agriculture and Industry, the two most important though most backward departments, are ridiculous, and prove the irresponsible character of the Government. Much more money should be allotted to these heads. Closely allied is the subject of Co-operative Credit Society, and it is a matter of very great regret that this Department, which is really the handmaid of the people's material progress, has always received very cold treatment at the hands of the Government. Its officers, who for unknown reasons are considered to be on the temporary list, receive no encouragement by way of graded or time-scale salary. In fact it is said that the Inspectors in this Department, who are mostly as qualified as the officers of the subordinate executive service, have received no increment of pay for the last 15 years, and have remained content with the magnificent pay of Rs. 105, and its auditors have got no addition to their remuneration, although audit fees at an increased rate are being realized from the Co-operative Credit Societies of by no means affluent circumstances. The Registrar of the Co-operative Societies has in vain represented the hard lot of the officers of his department, and gone to the length of forecasting a strike among his officers. A sum of Rs. 38,000 has been provided in the present Budget for additional staff. One fails to see the wisdom of increasing the number of discontented officers in the department, instead of making the existing officers contented and therefore more efficient in the discharge of their duties.

Babu BEJOY KRISHNA BOSE: I rise to a point of order. Are the non-official members to speak in the absence of the Members of the treasury bench? These speeches are made for the Finance Member and his Secretary, but neither of them is here. We are talking to empty benches.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Mr. Bose, I cannot command the attendance of any member, but I can assure you that in another place people often make speeches to only two members of the House.

Babu BDRODA PROSAD DEY: Under the head Civil Works, it is, indeed, pleasing to note that the poor condition of the Grand Trunk road between Howrah and Paltaghat has received the attention of the Government, and a fairly large allotment has been provided for its improvement. The owners of motor cars and lorries will certainly feel grateful, but there is another side to this matter which should also receive the kind attention of the Government. The enormous clouds of dust raised continually by the motor cars and lorries not only make the lot of pedestrians unenviable, but also do positive injury to the public health by depositing layers of dust upon all articles of food stocked in the roadside shops, not to speak of costly furniture in road side houses. The Government choose to refer to the municipalities concerned for the redress of this heavy grievance, knowing full well that the resources of these local bodies are hopelessly inadequate for the purpose.

Coming to the administration of justice we find provision has been made for two additional Judges of the High Court. Time was when there were only 12 Judges for the High Court including Bihar and Orissa, and one Judge generally used to sit for the Original Side of the High Court We now find that without Bihar and Orissa the number is going to be increased by 50 per cent., and four Judges generally sit for the Original Side. In congratulating the profession of law one has to condole with the litigant public. The increase in the business of the Original Side raises the important and long deferred question of establishing a City Court for the town of Calcutta. Under the Administration of Justice the question of the establishment of union courts and benches should engage more attention and should be given a fair trial by selecting really worthy persons for the same.

The question of police expenditure is a perennial source of public complaint, and it is high time that a properly constituted committee of this Council should thrash this question thoroughly with a view to making the Police Department a really popular one as it should be. The increased grant under the Police Criminal Investigation Department and the District Intelligence Branch is as [illegible] objectionable as the reduced grant for travelling allowances, which is false economy. The allied subject of the jail is even more unpopular. The treatment of political prisoners in almost all the jails has been severely commented upon on the platform and in the press without any change for the better, and the practice has always been to select convenient jail visitors. The less said about the sorry condition of ordinary prisoners the better, for they are not treated as human beings. A thorough overhauling of the jail system has become an imperative necessity in the interests of the

administration of justice. The big loan proposal for police buildings should not be accepted by the Council. Such a loan should rather be raised with a view to finance some of the nation-preserving projects, as was suggested last year by the revered leader of the Swarajya party. I beg to close my remarks by objecting to the inclusion of a sum of Rs. 83,000 for the appointment of circle officers for the furtherance of the policy of the development of Village Self-Government. In my humble opinion the said policy will be much better developed by the Government grant of that sum to the existing Union Boards than by the appointment of circle officers of doubtful utility. It is known that a committee is sitting to consider the whole question of Indian services, so this money should not be spent before the decision of that committee.

Babu KHAGENDRA NATH GANGULY: The Hon'ble the Finance Member has submitted this year an interesting Budget. It is interesting in more ways than one, for it enunciates or attempts to enunciate some sort of policy behind the Budget for the year 1925-26 and the Hon'ble the Member states that the policy and proposals in the transferred departments are those of His Excellency the Governor himself. Such a booming announcement may very well flabbergast a superficial observer, but a closer examination of the details of the Budget and the allocations to the different departments will easily convince any unbiassed person that the time for congratulation is not yet. The oft-repeated doleful cry of the Hon'ble the Member for the remission of our provincial contribution of 63 lakhs shows that all is not well with the heterogenous materials wherewith the framework of the present Budget has been prepared. The Hon'ble the Member frankly admits that if we do not secure the remission of our provincial contribution it will not be possible to make provision for several items of expenditure which have otherwise been provided for—in other words ours will be a deficit Budget of Rs. 33 lakhs. From the inauguration of the Reforms we have always been working with a deficit Budget, and I honestly believe that an administration carried on the same spirit and on the same lines can never show a flourishing Budget. The good old cry of change of heart on the part of the bureaucracy is as much a dream as ever. The tinkering process of a patchwork here and there can never satisfy a people who are just being lashed to political consciousness by a series of oppressive measures and lawless laws.

Let me now examine a few of the details of the Budget. At the outset I must say that however much the Hon'ble the Finance Member may to express his solicitude in paying attention to the wants of the transferred departments and by whatever jugglery of figures which have been mercilessly exposed by Rai Harendranath Chaudhuri, the Government may claim credit for allotting a proportionately larger amount than on the reserved side, the fact that the great problems of the province, *viz.*, eradiation of malaria and kala-azar pestilence,

scarcity of good and sufficient drinking water, preservation of cattle and spread of primary education amongst the people, these are problems which have not been attempted to be solved.

Under the head "Excise," the Hon'ble the Member has stated with some degree of complacency that he expects an increase of 17 lakhs over the current revenue. Instead of gloating over this anticipated increase, I regard it in the light of a misfortune in as much as the bureaucracy has succeeded in larger exploitation of the vice of drink and drugs. The figures are no doubt capable of explanation as the Member in charge has said, but the outstanding fact remains that a sympathetic Government would have put its foot down against the vice in such a poverty-stricken land as ours.

The expenditure on the reserved side shows a steady increase and the General Administration Budget is 6¼ lakhs in excess of that of the current year. A cursory glance of the details of expenditure under this head will at once show how wooden the machinery of administration is. In last year's Budget discussion there was strong criticism against the inclusion of superfluous and showy items such as Band Establishment of His Excellency the Governor and some of the tour expenses but instead of any curtailment in response to popular opinion these expenses are incurred as merrily as ever.

The Police Budget must in the usual course show an increased expenditure and the excess is 3 lakhs. The responsibility for the increase is attempted to be fastened on the report of the Lee Commission by which larger salary has been recommended for superior officers. The brunt of the increased cost, however, is due to the entertainment of a temporary staff to check the activities of the revolutionary party. The people in general know what reliance is to be placed on the latter statement. In this connection I may say that there is a proposal for the construction of nine police buildings at a cost of Rs. 16,72,100 of which 8½ lakhs is proposed to be taken as loan from the Government of India during the next year. Sir, I cannot too strongly deprecate this scheme. There are hundreds of works of urgent and genuine public utility which have been held up for want of funds or insufficient funds but this housing of policemen must in the eyes of the bureaucracy take precedence of all other works.

The Hon'ble the Finance Member does not seem to be altogether devoid of a sense of humour. He has met the constructive proposal of Deshbandhu C. R. Das, who suggested the taking of a loan of 5 crores of rupees for the amelioration of the condition of the people of the province, by allotting the princely sum of 1¼ lakhs under the head of "Public Health". This is, indeed, sympathy with a vengeance.

The Hon'ble the Member's statement is full of anxiety to convince the members of Council about the Government's readiness to help the transferred departments. But as only 2¼ lakhs have been provided for

assisting local bodies as against the provision of 8 lakhs last year, the Member in charge explains it by saying "this is entirely due to the fact that local municipalities have no schemes in readiness towards which they desire Government assistance." Sir, I certainly do take very strong exception to the above statement. Representing as I do the municipal areas of Howrah and being myself a Municipal Commissioner of Howrah I am in a position to challenge the above remarks. My municipality did ask from the Government for a loan of Rs. 1,50,000 for a new engine for their head waterworks at Serampore. The proposal for this loan was included in the Budget estimate of loans of 1924-25 in accordance with the request of the municipality, dated 12th October, 1924. As, however, the municipality did not receive the loan although budgetted for by the Government they wrote to the Government through the Divisional Commissioner as far back as 23rd July last for the said loan, but the Divisional Commissioner for absolutely unfounded reasons came to the conclusion that the Howrah Municipality did not urgently require the said loan either during the current year or next year and recommended to the Government accordingly. On receipt of a copy of Divisional Commissioner's letter the Chairman of the Howrah Municipality again wrote to the Government in the month of November, 1924, through the District Magistrate, refuting the arguments of the Commissioner as being based on misconception and further pointing out that the Government were committed to the contribution of a loan of Rs. 5,00,000 for the Waterworks Improvement Scheme so far back as the year 1911 and that the municipality had received up to date only Rs. 3½ lakhs. The purchase of the new engine is an item included in the said scheme and as such the municipality were entitled to secure the advance of the balance of Rs. 1½ lakhs. After this communication the Secretary to the Government of Bengal informed the municipality in January last that no provision could be made in the loans Budget for 1925-26, as it had already been prepared by Government. Sir, you can now well understand the degree of solicitude of the Government and how it belies the words of the Hon'ble the Member when he says that the Government are fully anxious to do what they can to meet the wants of the transferred departments. Well, Sir, the engine at the head waterworks is an urgent and an absolute necessity, so much so that the water-supply in the whole town of Howrah may be stopped if the only old engine at present working for distribution purposes goes out of order. I really hope that the Government will still see their way to include this item in the loans Budget.

Another matter which as a resident of Howrah, I can not but draw the attention of the Government is the wretched condition of the Grand Trunk road. This is one of the principal throughfares of Howrah and is entirely maintained by the Government with the help of

contributions from our municipality. Curiously, however, either through want of proper supervision or for want of proper and sufficient expenditure of money for the same, the repairs are so slovenly done that huge ruts and deep gullies are formed within a month of the repairs of the said road. Sir, this shows how the large amount of money earmarked for the Public Works Department is judiciously spent and how the highly paid officers of that department discharge the duties they are entrusted with. This reminds me of an incident in which when the civil court buildings were badly leaking after a heavy shower, one of the subordinate judges told the Public Works Department Inspector in my presence that their department might very well be called Public Waste Department. This, no doubt, offended the sensibilities of the officer concerned, but to my mind there is every justification for the said remark.

Sir, we suffer under no delusion that our opinion carries any weight with the Government nor is their any hallucination on our part that our discussions of the Budget are in any way likely to advance the cause of Swaraj, which is our destined goal. The Reforms have brought in their train additional taxation and additional misery on the suffering millions of the land and the cry of innocence from behind the prison bars testify to the splendid work done during the last four years of the Reforms. The hollow mockery of the discussion is painfully evident when we consider that the crying demands for adequate expenditure for anti-malarial works, for removal of drinking water scarcity, for proper expansion of primary education agriculture and industries are still as insistent as ever and are not likely to be attended to by an unsympathetic bureaucracy.

Dr. MOHINI MOHAN DAS spoke in Bengali. A translation of the speech is given below:—

The Council meets again after a year. We have assembled again to discuss the Budget for the next year. We have got to waste a few days' time and some money over discussions on the Budget, not a single word of which will be listened to, and on which no resolution will be accepted. Before the discussion commences, I thank Mr. Bholanath (*sic*), the Finance Member. For, the cleverness shown by him in his Budget speech is really something new. To put in plain language, his speech is only magic—an effort to show what does not really exist. Of course, we have seen many such things, but what is there in this Budget? What are we to discuss? It is not worthy of discussion. The same old cry, there is no money, no money, no money. With regard to the sums of money provided this year for the nation-building works, if the annual contribution of Rs. 63,00,000 has got to be paid to the India Government, then, probably, all these works will become impossible to carry out; but the steel frame and the police will remain

quite intact. According to Mr. Bholanath (*sic*) the main cause of the deficit is the increase of expenditure on account of the Lee Commission and the increase of the police expenses. Officers on excessively high salaries have been appointed from before in this poor country for the purpose of administration and there have always been agitation and protest against it. But in spite of all that, provision has been made to spend in defiance of public opinion, lakhs of money belonging to the poor people in order to increase the pay of the Indian Civil Service and to offer them facilities to take trips to England. What great danger had arisen necessitating this increase of expenditure? Had it become really impossible to find men in this country at the old rate of pay? To come to the police. This year three lakhs more have been provided for "secret money" for the police, as also one lakh in place of Rs. 75,000, that is, twenty-five thousand rupees more than last year's allotment. We do not know for what work this "secret money" is spent. Perhaps this money is spent against the workers for the country, or the greed for this money robs the poor people of the country of their character and morals. We do not know anything about this matter; what more shall we discuss about a subject, which is beyond our knowledge? We believe that future members will, perhaps, come to a day when the whole of the revenue of 10 crores of this province will be spent on the Police Department alone. One may come to think like that when one sees the gradually increasing estimates for this department. No progress is possible for want of money, for the education, sanitation and agriculture of the country; but one is surprised at the waste of money in this department:

(1) Forty thousand rupees have been allotted this year for the construction of barracks at Jalpaiguri for family quarters for thirty married British Constables.

(2) Ninety thousand rupees for the transfer of the Sukhea Street Thana to the former Alms House.

(3) One lakh of rupees for the construction of the police buildings at Jorasanko.

(4) Ninety-three thousand rupees for the reconstruction of the Park Street Thana.

(5) One lakh and fifty thousand rupees for the amalgamation of Bowbazar Street and Hare Street Thanas.

(6) Fifty thousand rupees to acquire land for the Shampuker Thana.

(7) One lakh and 25 thousand rupees for the construction of building for the Muchipara Thana.

(8) Seventy-one thousand rupees to acquire land for the Burtollah Thana.

What right Government have to spend public money in this way? Ninety-five per cent. of the population of this country live in the villages; why should they be cheated by having their money spent in this way in the towns? If a handful of men of this country have become discontented, Government shall have to make peace with them, the root-cause of their unrest will have to be removed. Without remedying the diseases, why should public money be spent in this way on the plea of establishing peace in the towns? The people living in the villages have no need of all these things, why should they give money out of their pockets for this purpose even to the point of being robbed of their all? It is owing to the activity of this Police Department when the Ordinance was promulgated that the members for Noakhali and Bankura are prisoners to-day. Bankura and Noakhali have to-day no representatives in this House, but still the people of Noakhali and Bankura shall have to bear the expenses of this Police Department. In December last, under the Ordinance, the police searched at their pleasure more than two hundred houses all over Bengal, but found nothing; their efficiency may be judged from this. Has anybody been punished for this failure of theirs? It is said that every thing was concealed away on receipt of previous information. It was possible to conceal away things which could endanger the peace and progress of the country, and yet we have got to bear the expenses of the police. What irony of fate? The feeling of national consciousness is absent from this vast Police Department; that is why indications of their failure are to be met with at every step. Government are always in the habit of saying that they are the only guardians of the "dumb masses". Only five and half per cent. of the members of the community to which I belong, the vast Namasudra community are literate but the small sum of money which, for once only, two years ago was specially provided for this depressed community, has not been found for the last two years. Do Government believe that their responsibility ends with spending money only on luxury in education in the towns? What do the masses gain from this university in the town? There are very few people among them who can afford to give their boys the so-called education in the towns spending thirty or forty rupees every month or more for that purpose. They want educational arrangements in the villages and require compulsory free primary education, which, I am afraid, is impossible in the present circumstances. Last year the whole of Madaripur and Gopalganj, the constituencies which I represent, were overflooded and the people ruined. The starving, houseless people fought with death, but Government did either perhaps, consider it unnecessary to render them any kind of help or think that any such expenses would be a waste of money. Last year the flood was due, no doubt, to an abnormal rise of water, but the canal route between Madaripur and Harirampur is responsible for the annual loss of crops in that locality. A dam has

been constructed along the south-eastern bank to increase the flow of water in that part and even the few culverts in the dam are almost always kept closed by means of wooden planks, in consequence of which all the crops on the north-west side of the canal are destroyed, and as the result of excessive rise of water or breaches in the dam, sudden rise of water takes places on the south-east side. The standing crops being unable to keep above the level of the rising water, all the crops of the lands on the south-east side are destroyed. It is not a case of accident; year after year this flood has been occurring regularly and the helpless cultivators curse their own lot. Those whose mainstay is agriculture are being ruined every year in this way; how can they arrange for the education and the improvement of the health of their children? How can they improve their own condition? Owing to the collection of tolls from this canal route and to the facilities afforded for the passage of the steamers of foreign merchants, the people of the locality run every year into danger. The canal has been dug with the money of the raiyats, for their own exploitation, so that they may remain without food, without house and without education, having lost their all, thousands of rupees are spent every year for this canal. And it is in this way that the masses are digging their own graves. We warn Government from beforehand that a class of starving and houseless people is appearing in Bengal as the result of this oppression and harrassment; we are unable to realize what will be the condition of the country if they are once perturbed. As regards the unceasing cry of want of money which we hear, we can have huge wealth if a single measure is adopted. Jute is grown only in Bengal in the whole world and all the trades of the world will stop if no jute is to be had. Why is a thing, which is not grown elsewhere and which the world cannot dispense with, sold by maunds and not by seers? If the Bengalis had control over this jute, we might have gained crores of rupees only from jute and it would have been possible to remove all our wants. But that is impossible before the attainment of Swaraj.

Dr. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY: Sir, I am not daunted by the fact that there is no quorum in the Council at present, but so long as the Finance Member is here I shall be quite satisfied if I can deliver my speech within his hearing. I only hope and trust that he will not be dozing off as I saw him doing while another gentleman was speaking a little while ago. Before I go on to the subject-matter of the Budget may I make a personal appeal to the Hon'ble the Finance Member? If he is not by any chance of fate translated to a higher *gaddi* next year, I hope that before he makes his Budget speech, he will kindly circulate his Budget speech so that we may be able to follow his speech with more interest than we have been able to in the past two years. I am told that there was no quorum yesterday towards the fag end of the day. Why is it that members of the Council do not

take any interest or rather very little interest in the Budget debate. One reason may be, or probably is, that this present constitution of theirs has not been wholly modelled on the constitution of the Imperial Parliament; and if I am wrong you, Sir, would be able to correct me. Before the Budget comes to the House of Parliament the members have an opportunity of meeting the Government in the Committee of Ways and Means and the Committee of Supplies so that throughout the meetings of the committees the members are kept in touch with the policy underlying the Budget and, therefore, when the Budget comes before the House in its final form the members can take a lively interest in the discussion.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I may point out that the Budget presented by the Chancellor of the Exchequer comes as an absolute surprise to every member of the House.

Dr. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY: But before the Budget is actually discussed by the members I am told that it goes to the Committee of Ways and Means.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I may tell you that the Chancellor takes nobody into his confidence before he presents his Budget to Parliament.

Dr. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY: I stand corrected, Sir. At any rate I was thinking that there is a Committee under our constitution—I mean the Committee of Public Accounts; and before giving to us the details of the policy underlying the Budget of the future year, the Member in charge were to meet the members of the Committee a great deal of interest may be shown by the other members when the Budget discussion takes place.

I now come to my next point. The Budget as presented is in such a form that an ordinary individual gets very much puzzled: for instance, I find on page 65 under the head "General Establishment," "Contract Contingencies, Postage and Telegraphic Charges" the actuals in 1923-24 were Rs. 1,29,377, but under the head "Other Charges" have been debited Rs. 2,20,656. This year the Budget estimate comes to Rs. 3,09,600 and nothing under the head "Other Charges." So it is very difficult for any member to find out how the total under the head remains the same and how the transposition has taken place from one head to the other and naturally people begin to get confused. After all, it is a puzzle which the members of Council are, I suppose, not expected to unravel.

The Hon'ble the Finance Member has said that there is a policy behind the Budget. My friend, Babu Bejoy Krishna Bose, is more lucky than I am, as he says that he rubbed his eyes and found that there are three policies behind the budget: I did not rub my eyes and,

therefore, I did not see any policy behind the Budget which has been presented to us except one of *laissez faire*, one of drift. I listened carefully to the speech delivered by Mr. Donald before the Council and I have read also as carefully as I could the printed speech that was circulated and it left me with the impression that the author is a stone image without imagination which may inspire awe in his devotees, but to the uninitiated like ourselves, this speech has left behind a sense of despondency because our Gods are totally unmindful of granting relief to the suffering millions. Like an advocate pleading for a bad cause, he has quoted figures to show that the transferred subjects have not been neglected. He has shown that in spite of the fact that there have been no Ministers to guide the Government and to make demands on the public purse for their respective departments, the Government on the reserved side have not been unmindful of the claims of the transferred subjects, and out of the proposed new expenditure of Rs. 58½ lakhs, he has allocated Rs. 29½ lakhs for the transferred subjects and Rs. 20 lakhs for the reserved, leaving aside the allocation of Rs. 8½ lakhs for the police buildings, and if we exclude Civil Works, the figures are 7 lakhs for the reserved side and 17½ lakhs for the transferred departments. Should we not be grateful to the benign Government and applaud both the proposals and the policy behind them? Does it not prove that the reserved side of Government are quite capable and anxious to provide for the transferred side? *Ergo*, what is the use of having Ministers at all, for the so-called transferred departments, when the work can be done, perhaps, more satisfactorily by the present quartette?

The argument of Mr. Donald is obviously this—the total excess of expenditure over income on revenue account is above 89 lakhs. If the contribution of 63 lakhs is remitted, even then we shall have to draw to the extent of 26 lakhs from the balances of the previous years. Now, Sir, I raised the question last year and I raise the question again now and I shall do so as long as it is my privilege to speak on the Budget, that those balances which have accrued from the imposition of new taxes—and the present Finance Member and his predecessors are promise bound in this matter—should be devoted to a particular purpose. The great financier, the late Mr. Gokhale, once said before the Imperial Legislative Council that it is very unwise for any Government to leave any balance because the tendency is to put the balance always into capital expenditure. It is always best when the country is infested with malaria and other preventible diseases that the balances should be invested as soon as possible in raising a loan for the purpose of giving relief to the millions. The undertaking referred to above, must have worked unconsciously in the mind of the Hon'ble Mr. Donald because out of the extra provision that has to be made 26 lakhs has to be taken from the balances, and he may very well argue that as this

26 lakhs is meant for the transferred subjects, the promise has been kept. These arguments are very spacious, but suppose the provincial contributions are not remitted then in order to meet this sum of 63 lakhs new operations have to be stopped and the balances have to be drawn upon in order to meet the deficit of 33 lakhs on revenue account. The Hon'ble the Finance Member says that if the contribution is not remitted the proceeds from the new taxation will be swallowed up in meeting the normal wants of the administration, leaving nothing for progress or development, etc. Therefore, we see clearly that unless something is done immediately, so long as he holds the balances, his case for the revision of the Meston Ward, even if the deficits on the revenue account is shown to the Government of India, may not have the same force on them as it would have if the balances were invested in a loan as was suggested to Government last year. The Government of India would then be told that in response to previous undertaking having been given, the raising of loan was urgently necessary. We know the Government constituted as it is, uninfluenced and uninfluencable by the force of public opinion, cannot embark on any scheme or policy which is not time-honoured, and the result is we find that Mr. Das' scheme that he put forward before the Council last year has been mutilated beyond recognition. I had the honour and privilege of working out that scheme to some extent. Mr. Donald thinks that he has to a certain extent satisfied the people of Bengal by taking advantage of that scheme when he says that Government are not slow to consider proposals put before them by the members of the Council. I am really sad to think that Mr. Donald cannot or will not recognise the fundamental principles underlying Mr. Das' proposal. I do not complain that a provision of Rs. 1,25,000 only has been made for this proposal this year. No scheme can be carried into effect in one year and, therefore, the expenditure must be spread over a large number of years. But what I do complain is that Mr. Donald has taken the shadow and left the substance of the scheme behind. I will read out for the purpose of letting the members know the main proposals underlying that scheme:—

That a certain sum of money should be funded and earmarked for specific purposes, and that different amounts are to be allotted for the different heads and they should be administered as a Trust Fund. They should be given over to a Board of Trust like the Calcutta Improvement Trust, and secondly, *pari passu* with this allocation of funds local authorities should be constituted which will be charged with the responsibility of administering the revenues allocated to them by the Central Board of Trustees who shall exercise a general supervision over the local units.

There is a vast difference between this scheme and what Mr. Donald has proposed, apart from the question of the amount that has been allocated. In the first place, with regard to Budget allotments the chief difference in the outlook between the bureaucracy and ourselves has always been

this—that there is a fundamental disparity in the points of view between their method of allocating funds and ours. No one can argue that any Government can be run without funds, nor is it seriously suggested that from the Government point of view, the present Government or the Government of the past have wilfully squandered money, but surely, if we are to consider the budget at all, we must be prepared to tell the Government "your methods do not appeal to us." With the best of intentions in the world you cannot change your policy; you are accustomed to work in a particular groove and you cannot get out of it. Therefore, with regard to the nation-saving departments I purposely use the word "nation-saving" and not "nation-building" because we are going to be extinct unless some steps are taken immediately and because it is a question of life and death to us the suggestion of Mr. Das was that the expenditure should be under the control of a Board and the money should be earmarked for a particular purpose. The Board must be held responsible for evolving schemes of public utility and their actions will be subject to the ordinary Trust law

My next point is that the provision of Rs. 1,25,000 has been made for the purpose of subsidies to the district boards. Anyone who has a running knowledge of a district board knows that each district board has a jurisdiction of 3,000 square miles on an average and it cannot possibly control nor can it be held responsible for the sanitation of the district. The essence of the proposal put forward was that the entire charge of sanitation should be specifically laid upon a particular board like the Health Board in England and to one board alone who in turn will supervise the work done by local authorities responsible to them. These local authorities again must be developed not as agents of Government but they should be granted power of local management and thus a real form of local self-government would develop. Instead of that it is proposed to grant Rs. 1,25,000 to the district boards without any central board to control their activities in matters of sanitation and without the creation of local authorities.

[Here the member reached the time-limit and was given two minutes more to finish his speech.]

Lastly, no such scheme is possible unless there is a growing living interest in the people whom such scheme will affect. I say, therefore, that it is not only necessary to provide the money but at the same time to provide for the creation of such local authorities.

Sir, Sir Hugh Stephenson said last year and so does Mr. Donald this year that there was no scheme for spending money on. When the Calcutta Improvement Trust was created was there any scheme ready?

The last question that I would like to touch upon is the question that is in my own province and that is the question of provision for

epidemic diseases. It is said that there is no scheme that the local bodies have not asked for more money? Now, Sir, I say, where are your local bodies? The creation of local bodies is essential before you can get the proper return for the money given to them. The next point is that Mr. Donald says that the anti-malaria societies will take up the work against Malaria and, therefore, they have reduced the contribution from Rs. 1 lakh to Rs. 50,000. On the question I would just read out what the Rockefeller Foundation Board has said:—

Public health is essentially a function of the Government. No private or temporary agency, whatever its resources, would or should discharge responsibilities which by their nature belong to the constituted authorities of the country. Private enterprise, therefore, may be best employed in awakening public opinion and thereby encouraging State and country officials to establish permanent agencies for public health work. Responsibility for the control and cure of any disease can never be assumed by voluntary agency.

I do not understand why it is said by Mr Donald that this work should be done by a voluntary agency.

Mr. PRESIDENT: That is a very good stopping point, Dr. Roy.

Dr. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY: One more sentence, Sir. I find that the last item under epidemic disease is for anti-cholera measures for which a provision of Rs. 16,000 was made last year and has been omitted this year. Is it also because there has been no scheme for anti-cholera work. Nearly 80,000 people die from cholera every year in Bengal, and I do not know whether Mr. Donald would insist that the cholera patients before dying should send up an anti-cholera scheme for the consideration of Government. I give the same warning as I did last year. If the Government wants to be popular, let them develop the local authorities, decentralise their powers and give up this method of organised opposition to the wishes of the people. People whom God has put under your care will bless you. If you do not Ordinances and Secret Police cannot save you and us from a certain ruin.

Khan Bahadur S. MAHBOOB ALEY: I deeply sympathise with the Hon'ble the Finance Member for not being in a position to present us with a more favourable Budget than what he has done. He has pointed out with emphasis the difficulties of our province, if the annual contribution to the Central Government of rupees 63 lakhs is not remitted during the next year.

In order that remission may come and the finance of the province may be placed on a permanently satisfactory footing, it is necessary, not only that the members of this Council, but also the Government of our province should strongly urge upon the Government

of India and the Secretary of State the urgent necessity that exists for a revision of what is known as the Meston Award.

Everyone in this province feels, that in the making of that Award justice was not done to Bengal. While the Central Government draws very considerable income from Bengal in the way of Income-tax, Customs-revenue, Export-duties, etc., the province derives no benefit from those important and expanding sources of revenue but is forced to depend for its existence on certain small and inealistic sources of income.

The Meston Award ignored the needs of this province. Bengal is a deltaic country liable to heavy floods in the rains and is habitually unhealthy for a large part of the year. There is a strain on the public revenues to repair the ravages caused by floods or drought and to cope with the situation created by widespread disease in the shape of Malaria, Kala-azar, Cholera and other preventible ailments.

We have also a large population of agriculturalists, mostly Muhammadan, who form the backbone of the people, but who are so miserably poor and who are so much in the hands of money-lenders, that it is the bounden duty of Government to spend money to improve their condition by assisting them in the matter of education and agricultural improvements, and by the establishment of Co-operative Societies helping to organise them for their own benefit and progress. But for want of funds, no scheme, however necessary, may be framed or worked.

The Mussalmans form the predominant portion in the population of Bengal. But it must be admitted with regret that they do not occupy in this province that position of importance which is their due by reason of their population and their historical antecedents. To enable the Mussalmans to occupy the position which is their due, it is necessary that there should be special measures for the education of the Mussalman community. It is an admitted fact that Mussalmans are backward in education, and the condition of their community is to a great extent due to that backwardness. It is the duty of the Government to take special measures for the improvement of education of the Mussalman community. But urgent and just demands in that direction are always met with a reply that no funds are available.

I would, therefore, strongly urge on the Government the necessity of concentrating their energies on having the Meston Award set aside and to urge upon the Secretary of State and the Government of India the necessity of making an immediate investigation of the sources of revenue of each province, of the income derived by the Central Government from the several provinces, of their respective needs and of the making of an equitable adjustment between the Central Government

and our province on the basis of equity, so that while other provinces are in possession of funds enabling them to take up works of development, we in Bengal are being kept back and all progress with us is at a standstill.

I am glad to notice that a sum of rupees 3 lakhs is being asked for in the Budget for continuing the building of the Islamic College in Calcutta. It is a move in the right direction and the work has been taken in hand none too soon.

It is necessary that a representative Committee of Muhammadans should be appointed at an early date to consider the lines upon which the College should be conducted and the studies which should be included in its curriculum.

I am also glad to notice that a sum of rupees 2 lakhs has been set apart for the Calcutta University. I, however, invite the attention of Government to the desirability of urging upon the University authorities of making proper provision for the teaching of Arabic, Persian and other Islamic subjects at the University and earmark an adequate amount for this purpose.

It is a matter of regret that a sufficient number of Mussalman students do not avail of medical and engineering studies. The result is that there are very few Mussalman medical men or engineers. It is a matter that requires the serious attention of this Council and the Government. I admit that Mussalman students are probably not so keen as regards medical and engineering studies. But it should be the duty of the Government to overcome that disinclination and by sufficient inducement in the way of special scholarships to make Mussalman students take more readily and in larger numbers to those important branches of professional studies.

A Memorandum has been circulated to the members of this Council about a loan of Rs. 8,50,000 from the Government of India for certain police buildings in Calcutta. The proposal is an eminently reasonable one and will lead to economy. It will be a boon to future generations in as much as they will have valuable property in the shape of the police buildings, instead of having to pay probably an increase over the high rents that are now being paid and that will have to be paid for houses hired for the police.

I trust the scheme for giving the police, buildings of its own will be given effect to at an early date.

While speaking of the Department of Police, I cannot but repeat the complaint that I made last year that the Government has as yet done little to introduce a larger element of Muhammadans in the higher grades of the Police Service. It is a service for which Mussalmans are

eminently suitable. When given a chance, Mussalmans have shown that they deserve the highest praise in the performance of their duties as responsible police officers.

I strongly urge upon the Government the necessity of filling vacancies that will henceforth occur in the higher and subordinate grades by appointing a larger proportion of suitable Mussalman candidates both in the Bengal Police and in the Calcutta Police. I regret, that up to the present no Mussalman has been appointed as an Assistant Commissioner or as a Deputy Commissioner in the Calcutta Police.

As regards the proportion of Muhammadans in the Government services generally, I have noticed that whenever a question is put in this Council as to the appointment of Muhammadans, that question is met with a stereotyped reply that there is a rule that the proportion of Muhammadans in the public offices should be 33 per cent. and attempts are being made to arrive at that proportion. But what do we find in practice? I have heard complaints that in spite of pious rules and regulations, when it comes to making an appointment, the appointment does not go to a Mussalman though the percentage of Mussalmans in the office concerned may be a long way behind the 33 per cent.

Having regard to the very large number of Muhammadan graduates and under-graduates that are now available, it can hardly be said that there are no qualified Muhammadans to fill up the subordinate posts.

What I would particularly urge upon the Government is to strictly enforce its orders and see that the proportions of the different communities are duly balanced, so that there may not be any occasion for grievance on the part of any particular community.

In my remarks I have urged the claims of the Muhammadans community. I desire to emphasise that I do not want to see that the claims of any other community are disregarded. I want that there should be harmonious development of the various communities that reside in this province. For that purpose, it is necessary that communities like the one I represent, which, in spite of their importance, lag behind by reason of lack of opportunities and backwardness in education and economic progress, should be brought up to the level of the more advanced communities by special facilities and measures for their advancement.

If the Mussalman population of Bengal continues to be educationally backward and takes a backward place in the administration by reason of their small proportion in the public services of the province, it will be a disadvantage not only to them but will be a drag to the other communities and to the province at large.

My appeal for special advantages for my own community is made in the interests of the well being of the province as a whole, and I ask for the sympathy of the members of all other communities in such appeal.

[At this stage the Council was adjourned for 15 minutes.]

After the adjournment.

Adjournment.

On reassemblying, there was no quorum present and the Council was adjourned to 10-30 A.M. on Saturday, the 28th February, 1925, at the Town Hall, Calcutta.

Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Council assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act.

THE Council met in the Council Chamber in the Town Hall, Calcutta, on Saturday, the 28th February, 1925, at 10-30 A.M.

Present:

The Hon'ble the President in the Chair, the four Hon'ble Members of the Executive Council and 95 nominated and elected members.

Mr. PRESIDENT (the Hon'ble Sir Evan Cotton): Order, order! I want to remind the Council that there are some supplementary demands which should be taken up after the general discussion on the Budget. If this general discussion is finished to-day, we shall take up these demands on Monday. If we do not finish the general discussion of the Budget to-day, we shall continue again on Monday.

Budget of the Government of Bengal for the year 1925-26.

The general discussion of the Budget was then resumed:—

Babu SUDARSAN CHAKRAVORTY: I beg to say a few words with regard to the Budget presented to the Council. The most noticeable feature to my mind of the Budget under consideration is that the three taxation measures—the Stamp Act, the Court-fees Act and the Amusements-tax Act are allowed to continue and their proceeds appropriated—towards the needs of general administration. The House remembers that these were emergency measures for working out the dyarchy in Bengal which had to be deferred for want of funds. The necessity or rather the emergency is gone but the taxes remain and are assimilated with the ordinary revenue. Under the circumstances these taxes may be fitly described as illegitimate children of the dyarchy.

Another noticeable feature of the Budget is the expanded excise revenue and the official hide-and-seek with respect to it.

In the Budget of the Government of Bengal for the year 1924-25 we have the following statement:—

> The introduction of the fixed-fee system in all the districts in the presidency has caused a steady income in excise revenue the growth of which has further been *accelerated by the collapse of the non-co-operation movement.*

Does it not mean that the consumption of drinks and drugs has increased by reason of collapse of the non-co-operation movement. The hide-and-seek consists in this that in explaining the abnormal expansion

of excise by 17 lakhs of rupees in the Budget under discussion no mention is made of the collapse of the non-co-operation movement. But a sum of 5 lakhs is attributed to better administration of the excise revenue and 12 lakhs to a different system of accounting according to which the whole outturn without deducting the price paid to the Central Government for opium is credited in the receipts. It is not stated however that the balance of 12 lakhs represents the price paid to the Central Government. In these circumstances is one wide of the mark in observing that Goverenment exploits the vices of drug and drink for the sake of revenue? Is it not the clear duty of Government to vindicate its character by facts and figures?

Another important feature of the Budget is the morbid fear which marks it of enforcement against the Government of Bengal of the Meston demand of 63 lakhs of rupees. This fear is repeated many times in the Budget Speech of the Hon'ble the Finance Member and seems to have dictated what he calls a provisional Budget—a Budget which makes provision for works of development which it will be possible to carry out only if the Central Government remit the Meston Award of Rs. 63,00,000.

The Police Budget, however, enjoys an enviable position above the Meston Contribution. It is not provisional but certain and it is 3 lakhs of rupees in excess of what it was in the current financial year. Moreover, a loan of 8½ lakhs has been proposed for the police building scheme estimated to cost 17 lakhs of rupees out of which 8½ lakhs will have to be paid in the financial year under review. The alleged administrative convenience of these buildings we are asked not even to question, while the items of nation building few and small as they are, provisional and depend on the remission of the provincial contribution.

A Government that has to impose new taxes for the ordinary activities of life must be in a hopeless state of bankruptcy and remission of the provincial contribution cannot save it. The position, however, is, of Government's own seeking and I may say, the inevitable consequence of its policy? What is the good of fattening a small portion of the nation by unexpected and uncalled for increments of pay when the Government is unable to make any provision, worth the name for prevention of Malaria?

In the Department of Public Health I may mention Kala-azar which is a formidable menace to the district of Rajshahi. The rapid spread of the disease in the subdivisions of Naogaon and Natore attracted the attention of a philanthropic sect of *sadhus* whose activities in the matter of injection treatment bore admirable fruits. But local officials are not generally fond of such private enterprises and difficulties thrown in their way have put a stop to the activities of the *sadhus*. The provision of 1¼ lakhs for organising a Public Health Department under local bodies seems to be a move in the right direction.

This year we expected some provision against recurrence of the North-Bengal flood and the removal of the block from the mouth of the Baral in the district of Rajshahi.

In the Education Budget there is a provision of 3 lakhs in aid of non-Government schools. But there is no scheme before the public.

There is a small item of Rs. 17,000, for which provision ought to have, but has not, been made in the Budget, for sanitary arrangements in the new hostel buildings in the Rajshahi College. In this connection, I may mention that the Principal urged upon the Government the urgency and importance of the matter on several occasions. I request the Hon'ble the Finance Member to make it the subject of a supplementary demand..

Khan Bahadur Maulvi MD. CHOINUDDIN: I am more anxious about the fate of the Budget in general than I am, to consider its merits and demerits, to praise the Finance Member up to the skies or to condemn him. We do not know what is in store for the Bengal Budget for 1925-26. The fateful day, that is the 17th March, like the Ides of March, has not yet come and who knows what is going to take place after that day. My friends the Swarajists are wonderful men. For one thing I must give them credit. It is that they possess great powers of organisation and propaganda, and who knows that in the time before the 17th of March they will not be able to rally together all their renegades and attack the Budget after the 17th of March. My idea is that the Swarajists' sword, like the sword of Damocles, is still hanging over our Budget, and it is not unlikely that my friends on the other side will unsheathe that sword and attack the Budget with renewed vigour. But if they have got any such intention in their minds, I would solemnly request them to consider two points; one, whether their policy of obstruction has been of any avail, has been of any effect. I would also ask them to consider whether it is allowed by law.

Maulvi ABDUL GAFUR: On a point of order, Sir, is he discussing the Budget?

Mr. PRESIDENT: He is quite in order.

Khan Bahadur Maulvi MD. CHOINUDDIN: Of course so long as they have got freedom of speech in this House, they can vote in any way they like and say whatever they like, but as they say they are great lawyers, they are great constitutionalists, they are law-abiding people—I would ask them to consider in all seriousness, whether this method of obstruction is permitted by the Government of India Act of 1919. If we look at this obstructive policy from an utilitarian point of view, we find that it has proved utterly useless, not only useless but worse than useless. Their idea was that by this policy of obstruction the Government would be annoyed or terrorised into submission, and in place of the 8-anna Swaraj we now have, Government would be compelled to give

us 16-anna Swaraj or full autonomy. But what have we found in practice? On this very pretext Government may go to the other length and withdraw the 8-anna share and re-establish full-fledged, untrammelled bureaucracy as before. So judging from the point of view of utility the policy of obstruction, of throwing out the whole Budget, whether good, bad or indifferent, has only proved useless, and has not achieved the end which it had in view. This is what experience of the last six months has taught us. During the last six months we have lost dyarchy, lost the administration, by our own elected members, namely, the Ministers, of the transferred subjects which have been so long administered by Members of the Executive Council; so we see that this obstructive policy has been a failure from the utilitarian point of view. Next we have to consider whether this policy is at all allowed by the Government of India Act. My friends the Swarajists say that is perfectly constitutional, perfectly consistent with law, to entirely throw out the whole Budget; but I would ask them to refer me to the particular section or to any single sentence in the whole Government of India Act where we have got such powers. Probably they will refer me to section 72(*d*); but what does that section say? I challenge them to quote a single sentence from the whole Act where it is said that we have legal right to throw out the entire Budget. All that section says is that when the Budget is presented before the Council, members have the right of refusing some demands or reducing some demands, but it is nowhere said that the whole Budget could be thrown out and the Government paralysed. Is it not childish to think that the Government of India Act which is an Act of Parliament, would permit the Government of the country to be paralysed.——

Mr. PRESIDENT: We are not discussing the Government of India Act, Khan Bahadur, but the Budget of the Government of Bengal.

Khan Bahadur Maulvi MD. CHOINUDDIN: I am explaining that, I am coming to that—

Mr. PRESIDENT: The merits or demerits of the Government of India Act are not under discussion. What can be discussed is if you are of opinion that the transferred departments are better administered without Ministers, then you can enlarge upon that, but we do not want to have a discussion on the merits or demerits of the Government of India Act.

Khan Bahadur Maulvi MD. CHOINUDDIN: I would draw the attention of my friends to section 46 of the Government of India Act where it is said that the Government of Bengal shall be carried on by the Governor in Council with the Executive Council in respect of the reserved subjects and by the Governor acting with the Ministers in respect of the transferred subjects. So according to this section we do

not possess any legal power to throw out the Ministry or the Ministers' salaries. If this is the correct view of the law, I do not understand how it is possible for us to throw out the entire Budget and say that we are acting legally. In these circumstances my humble submission to them is that instead of dealing with the Budget in this way, I would ask them to criticise the Budget constructively, to come up with facts and figures to show the Finance Member where he is wrong, and to suggest certain deductions and thus give more money to transferred departments, and so on. It is in that way that we can effect improvement and gradually introduce a change in the angle of vision of the bureaucracy. This sort of wholesale attack will do no good to our constituents.

Now turning to the Budget itself I must say that it has not been very encouraging to me. In some respects I find it is very disappointing. For instance, we all know that the Co-operative Department is one of the most popular departments of the Government, which is engaged on the sacred and noble task of ameliorating the condition of the Bengal tenancy by establishing co-operative societies throughout the province, so that with the help of these societies our poor men can better their condition, have more money and save themselves from the tyranny of the usurious money-lenders, purchase the newly discovered seeds and manures of the Agricultural Department, and take advantage of education. But, unfortunately, though this Department has been in existence for more than 15 years, it is still not on a permanent footing. This state of things is very much to be regretted and I would respectfully ask the Finance Member to pay particular attention to this point and try to make the department permanent and also to revise the pay of its staff, which I understand has been sanctioned by His Excellency. Of course, the answer will be that no money is available, but if he is a very competent financier, I hope it will be possible for him to find the money in some way or other by reappropriation.

As regards the want of money, I think something may be done by making strenuous efforts to develop the *khas mahals* in the Sundarbunds, also by fighting with the Government of India to have provincial autonomy for Bengal so that we may have the whole of the income-tax and the export duty on jute, also by taxing excisable articles more heavily than at present, and by making cuts in the Budgets of some other departments without, of course, sacrificing their efficiency. These are some of the ways in which our financial resources may be developed.

There is another thing to which I would draw attention. The Department of Industries is very popular; there is our tannery at Tangra and the Weaving Institute at Serampur which are doing a lot of good to our people. Perhaps the House is aware that more than a

decade ago a piece of land was acquired by Government at a very high cost for location of the institute in it, but that land is still lying waste and the institute is located in a hired house for which Government pays a very high rent every month. Steps should be taken to construct a building on this site, particularly as the Missionary College authorities there have always been approaching successive Governors with a view to take away this piece of land.

Maulvi ABDUL GAFUR: My friend the Khan Bahadur has given us a long sermon. I did not mean to make a speech to-day, but the attack of my friend, the Khan Bahadur, has induced me to do so. I do not know whether he is a Minister in embryo, but he seems to have discussed the Swaraj party and not the present Budget. The Swaraj party knows its duty, and is not going to make any change in its programme, but is going to stick to it. I should like, however, to say a few words in answer to the Khan Bahadur who has also generally discussed the Budget. The Budget is a deficit Budget. I should say it ought to be so; impoverished, famished Bengal ought not to expect a prosperous Budget. The Hon'ble the Finance Member says that the Meston Award was unjust, grossly unjust. I say it is so in the fitness of things, because it was Bengal that first embraced the British connection and, therefore, she should pay the utmost she could, even beyond her resources. We know, however, that the Government is not going to change its policy, nor do we think that the Meston Award will be set aside to enable Bengal to ameliorate her condition. As regards policy the Hon'ble the Finance Member said that his colleagues in the Executive Council while introducing the particular heads of the Budget relating to their departments, would elucidate more fully the policy of the Government. Therefore, the Hon'ble the Finance Member has not come forward with any policy of his own. He left everything at the doors of the other members, and also to the credit of His Excellency, and he, as it were, stands aside.

I should like to say a few words as regards the Irrigation Department Budget first. The Hon'ble the Finance Member gave us certain hints which I am afraid it is not at all possible for me to understand. He himself says: "I do not propose to enlarge here on the technicalities of the Budget in regard to this expenditure. If the explanation given in the financial statement is not quite clear to anyone, it will be much easier to explain it across the table." Really, Sir, it is an anomaly, my poor intellect cannot grasp it. Irrigation has been dealt with under several heads, namely, under XIII, XIV, XV, XVI, and major head 55, which is the last head of the Budget. It is not possible for us to understand all this. What I can make out is this whatever little effort has been made towards irrigation, is for West Bengal and not for North or Eastern Bengal; it is not even for the whole of Western Bengal, but for that portion only which is known as the suburbs of

Calcutta and the districts of Burdwan and Nadia. These are the fortunate districts and the favour of the Hon'ble the Finance Member has been bestowed upon them.

I do not understand why the construction of the Subdivisional Officer's quarters at Madaripur has found a place here in the Irrigation Budget (page 21). I do not know how far it helps irrigation or navigation or drainage works; I am quite at a loss to understand this. There are several other heads which are placed under Irrigation, but for what reason I do not know; these are—

(*i*) reconstruction of the Dum-Dum Bridge;

(*ii*) construction of a new toll-office at Kidderpore;

(*iii*) reconstruction of Tollyganj Bridge;

(*iv*) reconstruction of Alipore Bridge; and

(*v*) construction of the Calcutta Canal Subdivisional Office.

All these things belong to the suburbs of Calcutta, and not to any other districts of Bengal, though the tenants of North and Eastern Bengal pay the largest share of revenue and the largest number of zemindars come from that side of the province.

As regards Irrigation itself, I want to say something. It is most necessary for ourselves and as Muhammadans we form the cultivating class of Bengal and we require it more than any other class. I come from the district of Pabna which is unfortunately placed between the two mighty rivers, the Brahmaputra and the Ganges. These two rivers vie with each other in drowning us.

Brahmaputra overflows a portion of Serajgunje every year and thousands of cattle die, but no provision has been made for an embankment. Damra should have an embankment and also Pabna, where rivetment taken up but later on was given up. Pabna is in imminent danger. Sluice gates should have been provided for Kinu Khal. There was to be some provision sometime back, but there is none in this Budget. As also sluice gates should be provided for Dapunia Khal, Ghazna Khal and river Chiknai. Drainage work near the Ishurdi station distance signal there is none. The railway line between Ishurdi and Serajgunje has done considerable damage to the paddy fields and has also affected the sanitary condition of the villages through which it has run. Also the old beds of the Ganges below Dasuria, Boroi Chara and Basherbanda have turned into marshy places. Already the water-hyacinth is there and those places, I fear, will be depopulated in no time. Karoloya and Atrari, where the water-hyacinth seems to have made its permanent home, are hot-beds of malaria. These require sledging. I regret that, whereas Government are spending lakhs of rupees in improving the suburbs of Calcutta, they have not a corner in their hearts for those far-off places. The poor peasants pay heavily into the Provincial

Exchequer, but they get the least benefit. They are dying of cholera, malaria, kala-azar, etc., in their hundreds. They cannot pay for doctors and cannot even buy barley. The poor villagers of Bengal cannot expect more than this sort of Budget, which cannot but be deficit under the present system of Government. As to the waterworks in Narainganje and in Kalimpong these have been improved because in both the places—there is an European colony, while those of other districts have been shoved into the background and neglected. Coming to Public Health, I am sorry to notice that no real work is being done to improve the cause of public health and all that has been done is to spend for paraphernalia. Anti-malarial measures have not been taken up to half the extent of what was done last year.

[Here the hon'ble member having reached his time-limit had to resume his seat.]

Maulvi KADER BAKSH: Sir, I rise to congratulate the Hon'ble the Finance Member on the Budget for 1925-26. It does not require much intuition to see that the Budget under discussion has been alternated with sighs and smiles. I say sighs first and smiles next: deliberately, for alas! the Hon'ble the Finance Member has begun with a sigh himself by saying that the period during which the Government of India's mercies about the 63 lakhs were falling over Bengal has come to an end, and if the Gods at Simla and Delhi do not run bankrupt of their charitable propensities, we are undone, hopelessly undone. We will not be able to expand, our schemes will be mere schemes, and the nation-building spirit in us, which is said to have received its impetus with the inauguration of the Reforms, is doomed to be curbed, or who knows, may find its vent in the manufacturing of bombs or the importing of arms which will make the Police Budget swell by a few modest lakhs if not crores; Sir, I confess I am not trained in the school of bureaucracy, far less in their art of budget-making. The House will, therefore, be spared with any effort on my part to deal with figures so industriously got up by the Hon'ble the Finance Member, I will be content only by making some general observations with reference to the Budget by taking an extremely common place view of the whole thing.

Firstly, Sir, it has been told times without number that you are very kind to teach us the art of Government. In other words, we have to learn this art from you, and then when you, our masters, think that we are fit, you will be pleased to gradually hand over to us the whole Government. My common-sense tells me, Sir, that it is the people first and Government next. That is to say, there must be some people already existing before there can be any Government. But what I read here in the Budget, Sir, a Budget prepared by one of our masters teaching us the art of Government. It is this, Government first, then the people, or to be more explicit—there must be the Government established by law with hundreds of highly paid officers and a whole army of police

(who must have palatial buildings to live in) and let alone the people with their benevolent associates—malaria, kala-azar, hookworm diseases, cholera, etc. The Budget perforce shows that it is more necessary that you should be first immune from thieves and robbers, and any breach of the public peace under the benevolent protection of the police truncheon, before you need to be free from the ravages of malaria, kala-azar, hookworm! There must be a costly police, no matter whether people are being decimated by diseases.

Sir, one member of a former Government of Bengal taught us the lesson that Government was not a charitable institution, at a time when a portion of the country was being ravaged by famine? He saw plenty of fruits in the trees, shoals of fish in the ponds which were all within easy reach of the people! Perhaps, that lesson has not been lost to the Hon'ble the present Finance Member who might have in view the many rivers of Bengal full of water when he made a provision of the huge sum of Rs. 2,50,000 for drinking water for the whole of the presidency! Sir, I remember, Mr. G. S. Dutt, when Magistrate of Bankura, once saying that "there was nothing but liquid mud for the people to drink." It is a pity that Mr. Dutt did not advise the people that the Ganges had plenty of water! Well, if there was liquid mud at that time, it is hoped that under the paternal care of the present Finance Member, the mud will be a little more liquid this time so that it may have easier passage down people's throats!

Sir, that noble Mr. G. S. Dutt who is also in the teaching line—I mean one of our teachers—has been lecturing on the vital needs of resuscitating our villages. He has given us many valuable ideas as to the work. We the people heartily wish for the reconstruction of our dying villages. But before anything can be done people have to be allowed to live; more drinking water is required, more dispensaries are required, more schools are required. It is a curious irony fate that where our needs are greatest the Budget helps us least, and where according to the common opinion of the people our needs are least, the Budget becomes most generous (*e.g.*, the Police Department).

To take the example of my district, Dinajpur: the population there was about 30 lakhs a few decades ago; but the last Census Report showed it to be 17 lakhs. The difference is very startling, indeed. If the rate of decrease goes on like this then, I am sure, the Census Report of say of 100 years hence will present the more starting figure of "0" (zero) unless, of course, it counts the heads of police who will, no doubt, be left there for the sake of good government to keep "Law and Order". Government know, perhaps, more than I do that the causes of such ravages in the villages are chronic malaria, kala-azar and the allied diseases, but, perhaps, they take these to be necessary evils to be fought not with the zeal of earnest fighters but with the indifference befitting fossilised bureaucrats! Should I tell the Government, Sir, that to fight

these evils no laborious processes of Ordinances are required but the very simple process of putting a little more money in the Budget for provision for drinking water, for dispensaries, etc. A Health Officer has been placed in the district, no doubt, but this gentle officer, perhaps, honestly dreams—dreams of putting the people's health all right being without funds! Sir, in the very nature of things, I believe, if I, as a humble representative of the people of my district, invented stories of sedition existing there or of bomb factories or secret societies bent on throwing off the Government and could persuade the Government to believe them, then Government would have, perhaps, readily agreed to pay for an increased staff of efficient police (?) but alas! if I cry for a little more money for the vital needs of the people, I know I shall cry in wilderness!

We have been told that the Medical Budget for 1925-26 approximates to that of the current year; we have also heard of kala-azar measures, anti-malarial measures, but are not the funds provided for these beneficent rather life-saving measures anything but inadequate? Why, for God's sake, don't you put more money for these schemes. The paternal Government sometimes shed crocodile tears for the ignorant masses; they say no sooner Englishmen will withdraw, they will fall a victim to the rapacity of the intelligensia.

Well said, indeed, but why a few more lakhs cannot be found for the benefit of the masses? I suggest in all earnestness that an additional amount of 14 lakhs be provided by way of grants to the several District Boards of the Presidency for the purpose of opening new dispensaries in the villages, for provision of good water and for carrying on anti-malarial and anti-kala-azar measures, etc.

The Police Budget is about 3 lakhs in excess of the revised Budget of the current year, and Rs. 40,000 have been provided for the constructions of barracks for married constables in Jalpaiguri, Rs. 8½ lakhs have been provided for the Calcutta Police buildings scheme. Again, Rs. 1,88,000 have been provided for Civil Court buildings and Munsifs' quarters. One is led to believe that in the eyes of Government all these constructions, additions, alterations are more beneficent than any schemes such as I have enumerated. According to the morality of the Budget, it is better to spend a few hundreds so that a married constable may live comfortably with his wife in a cosy barrack than ill-spending that amount for saving dozens of villages from the clutches of malaria. Why not divert these amounts for the purposes I have mentioned? It may be play to Government to spend this large amount for fighting the chimera of the revolutionary party which exists nowhere except in their imagination, for police buildings, for munsifs' quarters, etc., but, Sir, it is so much death to others who deserve by all means a more humanitarian treatment.

Now, Sir, another crying need of the people is the spread of education both primary and secondary. It is, indeed, a pity that primary education could not be made free and compulsory as yet. Is it very creditable, Sir, for a civilised government to say that nearly 90 per cent. of her subjects are illiterate?

The increase of few lakhs in the Educational Budget over the revised Budget of the current year is mainly due to the increase of pay and travelling allowances, etc., and the increment is not really for the spread of and help towards education. The other day we say in the papers a recommendation for a holy war to be waged against illiteracy. This warfare, Sir, means a very heavy expenditure. We would be very grateful to see that adequate funds are provided for waging such a war against illiteracy. But I might tell you, Sir, that even the idea of a mock fight would be simply ridiculous with the fund provided for the department.

Sir, in Dinajpur district only one private High English school receives Government grant. There are several High English schools in the mufassal, none of which gets any grant. I personally approached the authorities several times for grants towards some High English schools in the mufassal and I was told that the policy of the department is only to keep the schools at the sadar headquarters and subdivisional headquarters running and not to make any grant to such private institutions, and, Sir, in my district some longstanding good High English schools have ceased to exist and some are on the verge of being discontinued for want of Government grants.

Sir, I find in the Budget that no provision has been made for model maktabs, though a provision is to be made in the revised Budget of the current year to the extent of Rs. 2,000 towards establishment and contingencies. Is it the policy of the department to abolish such institutions altogether and, if so, why?

Kumar SHIB SHEKHARESWAR RAY: Sir, it was not my intention to take part in the general discussion on the Budget this year, but if I have decided to speak a few words to-day it is because of some uncharitable remarks which Mr. K. C. Ray Chaudhuri, evidently in ignorance, passed on the community which I have the honour to represent in this Council, namely, the Bengal zemindars.

Mr. K. C. Ray Chaudhuri, as we all know, occupies a seat in the Council, which is in the gift of the Hon'ble Mr. Donald.

Mr. K. C. RAY CHAUDHURI: I rise to a point of order. What has that got to do with my speech?

Mr. PRESIDENT: As a matter of fact he is a nominated member and the nominations are made by His Excellency the Governor.

Kumar SHIB SHEKHARESWAR RAY: Very well, Sir, I stand corrected, but as I think Mr. K. C. Ray Chaudhuri is nominated to represent labour and as the department of labour is under Mr. Donald, he must have some say in the matter of his nomination.

It is, therefore, only natural that the member should play the part of an apologist for his master whenever called upon to do so. In the circumstances no one would take him seriously even if he out-heroded Herod in his love for the Meston Settlement, but when, in his attempt to cover the sins of his master's acts of omission and commission, he trespasses on grounds which even his master would not dare tread upon, it becomes necessary to expose his pretensions.

Sir, yesterday Mr. K. C. Ray Chaudhuri made his appearance before the House in a multitude of quaint rôles with the versatility of a quick change artist. It would not be possible for me within the allotted time to point out to you the absurdities of all his get-ups. I would, therefore, take up only a few of them. Let me begin with Mr. K. C. Ray Chaudhuri in the rôle of an authority on taxation. He has told the House that there was nothing wrong with the Meston Settlement.

Mr. K. C. RAY CHAUDHURI: May I rise to a point of order. I never said that.

Kumar SHIB SHEKHARESWAR RAY: I knew that he would deny and that is the reason why I took a typed copy of his speech from him personally, and he has said there that there is nothing wrong in the Meston Settlement.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I want to interpose. It might have been in the typewritten copy of the speech but it is not necessarily spoken by the member.

Kumar SHIB SHEKHARESWAR RAY: In that case, I stand corrected, Sir. The people of Bengal numbering about 47 millions must pay a tax of Rs. 20½ crores to the Imperial Exchequer, whereas the rest of India with a population of 200 millions need not pay more than 31 crores. This is the first great equitable principle of Mr. K. C. Ray Chaudhuri's theory of taxation.

And if this system of Imperial levy-sanctioned by the Meston Settlement and approved by Mr. K. C. Ray Chaudhuri; left no money to Bengal even for her barest needs; why the great Bastable of India is ready with his advice; "Go and tax the zemindars of Bengal"! For, Sir, according to him the Permanent Settlement of Bengal is at the root of all distress in Bengal.

I wonder, Sir, what Mr. K. C. Ray Chaudhuri would say if I place the views of His Excellency the Governor in this connection. Addressing the Council in 1921 he said: "The first observation I would make is with reference to disposing of the fallacious statement which is so often

made on account of the Permanent Settlement, Bengal does not pay its proper share ".

Dr. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY: Is the hon'ble member quoting from Lord Lytton's or Lord Ronaldshay's speech?

Kumar SHIB SHEKHARESWAR RAY: I think that as Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy is an authority in charge of the finances of the Calcutta University, he should know this much that in 1921 Lord Ronaldshay was the Governor of Bengal and not Lord Lytton. I may, Sir, point out that Mr. K. C. Ray Chaudhuri enjoyed the privilege of being nominated by Lord Ronaldshay.

Dr. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY: Mr. K. C. Ray Chaudhuri was also nominated by Lord Lytton.

Kumar SHIB SHEKHARESWAR RAY: Yes. Well, Sir, referring to the statement that on account of the Permanent Settlement, Bengal does not pay its proper share towards its cost, he said, " Nothing can be further from the truth ". Sir, mark his words: " Nothing can be further from the truth " that the Permanent Settlement is responsible for the distress in Bengal."

Mr. K. C. Ray Chaudhuri then appears as an authority on the Land Revenue system of Bengal and wants to do away with the Permanent Settlement of Bengal by a flourish of his tongue. Whether the John Company of Mr. K. C Ray Chaudhuri was right or wrong in confining the system of Permanent Settlement to Bengal in 1793, is a matter which I need not discuss here, for it does not affect the position of the present day Bengal zemindars in the least If Mr. K. C. Ray Chaudhuri would take the trouble of looking up any book of reference on the subject, he would find that even so early as 1860 more than 80 per cent. of the originally settled permanent estates had changed hands not once or twice but scores of times. If he would care to look up annual reports of the Departments of Registration and Land Revenue, he would find that even now, about 10 per cent. of the estates changed hands annually. Now, Sir, does his sense of equity if not his knowledge of finance say, that even assuming that John Company was wrong in 1793 you can tax those, who, on the basis of a legalised system which is now nearly 150 years old, have invested their surplus income in purchasing landed estates at their fullest market value calculated on the existing profits? Does his theory of taxation propose to exempt people who invest their surplus income in stocks, shares and securities or as working capital, no matter how obtained—may be by misappropriation of trade union funds or through forced economy by being made a temporary guest of His Majesty.

With what justice can he call people parasites simply because they invest their surplus income in landed estates instead of in stocks and shares.

Then, Sir Mr. K. C. Ray Chaudhuri had the audacity to say tha the Bengal zemindars are undertaxed. Sir, the total annual rent o land in Bengal is about 13½ crores, and the amount of land revenue pai by landlords is about 3 crores. This works out at the rate of 42 pie in the rupee. Does Mr. K. C. Ray Chaudhuri know at what rate h pays taxes on his own income? Of course, I do not know whether h pays any income-tax at all. But I do hope that he himself is not parasite living on the bounty of State without paying a single pie t its coffers. If I assume, Sir, that he has an annual income of say Rs. 5,000, in that case he pays only 6 pies in the rupee as tax. Now Sir, does it lie in his mouth to say "impose further taxes on zemin dars whose average income according to his own showing is not mor than Rs. 1,000 a year."

Sir, the last rôle in which he appeared before the House was tha of a *raiyat bandhu*. Well, Sir, there are about 75 members on th Council who have come here as representatives of the raiyats; I am glad to note that none of them has said a single word against th zemindars. I can, therefore, with ease ignore the vituperative fulmina tions of one who has come here as a nominated member and not as an accredited representative of the raiyats.

Mr. N. C. SEN: I offer my heartiest congratulations to the Hon'ble the Finance Member on his Budget speech which I consider to be a master-piece of illusion. Sir, ever since my school days when I firs made my acquaintance with Sir Walter Scott's wonderful characters I have held the Scotsmen in great awe and reverence.

Born in a widly magnificent but unproductive country, brought up on Haggis and matured in whisky, smiling or sighing in fields of heather, the Scotsman develops a character in which all the qualities that go towards the making of a leader of men harmoniously blend. He predominates every sphere of life and is an equal success be he a mill manager or a Finance Member. He is shrewd but industrious, bold yet cautious and his manners are frank and persuasive. In an expansive mood he is gracious and even generous. But, Sir, beware of him when he seems most gracious and has a smile on his lips and a twinkle in his eyes for then he is most dangerous. When he is hard and aggressive, you may succeed in getting something out of him, but when he is generous and gracious you may be sure you are going to be fooled.

Sir, when I was listening to the Budget speech, and heard the Hon'ble the Finance Member announce that he had set apart Rs. 50 lakhs this year for new expenditures on schemes which on completion will cost Rs. 71 lakhs and out of that Rs. 40 lakhs represented expenditure on the transferred departments I rubbed my eyes to make sure I was not dreaming. I thought to myself, at last the angle of vision has changed and a new era has dawned. A spirit of elation possessed me and my

heart overflowed with joy. I wanted to rush up to the Hon'ble the Finance Member and shake him by the hand and tell him that at last, he has killed the policy of obstruction and removed the root-causes of revolutionary activities. Then I suddenly remembered that the Hon'ble the Finance Member was a canny Scotsman and had in abundance the pawky humour that characterises his race and all my elation gave place to caution. I resolved to study the Budget before I congratulated the Government or the people.

Sir, the first thing that struck me on a close study of the Hon'ble the Finance Member's speech was that it is a Budget in the interest of the classes and not of the masses. The contemplated expenditure on the transferred departments will not be on nation-building schemes but for providing further luxuries for the rich who live in towns.

Sir, I represent a poor and much neglected rural constituency and feel I shall be sadly neglecting the interests of my constituents if I did not raise my voice, however feeble, in protest against the present policy of the Government of catering to the needs of the rich and neglecting the poor. At this stage I do not intend to go into minute details and I will make my point clear by a few illustrations. Under the head Civil Works provision has been made for the expenditure of Rs. 9 lakhs on three schemes:—

The first item. The first is for the improvement of Grand Trunk road between Howrah and Paltaghat at a cost of 4 lakhs of rupees—out of which Rs 2 lakhs is to be spent this year. The wealthy motorists lolling in their luxurious cars in driving out of town are subjected to unpleasant jerks at times, and have been complaining to the Government. Can the gods sit idle? Certainly not. What does it matter if thousands die of malaria, millions for want of good drinking water? What does it matter if the villagers go without food or medicine? The influential and vocal intelligentia must be appeased. They nerves must not be jerked nor their bodies shaken. The roads must be repaired and improved.

Take again the second item. A sum of Rs 2,87,000 have been provided for tar-macadaming the maidan roads. Is it not the opinion of the Hon'ble the Finance Member that these roads "compare unfavourably with the asphalted roads of the Corporation"? Mark the words "compare unfavourably". They are not bad, ill-kept or narrow, but they compare unfavourably. Can the Government allow such a thing? What will people say? They might go to the impudent length of suggesting that the Swarajist Corporation is more mindful of the Calcutta citizen than the Government. That cannot be allowed. Let the district boards cry themselves hoarse for a little help for improving village roads or opening up new roads where none exists. Those schemes will benefit the dumb millions only. The dumb millions

cannot make speeches or get articles written in the newspapers. Government need not pay heed to them at present. The trustee-ship of these people is completely discharged by an occasional grant of a few thousands.

Let us now turn to the third item. A sum of Rs. 4,20,000 for improvement of the road from Teesta Valley to Kalimpong. Is there any great urgency for the work? Certainly. Is it not Kalimpong the growing Anglo-Indian hill station? Can we leave the residents to the tender mercies of bullock carts and hill ponies? Kalimpong is a Government estate. Someday it is bound to be remunerative and popular at least the Government think so at present. What does it matter if this scheme like the other so-called remunerative canal and other schemes prove unremunerative? Is not the expectation honest at present? Are not the advisers of the Government all honourable men? So much for Civil Works.

Now let us turn to educational grants. The unreasonable Nationalists, nay, even sensible Moderates complain about the inadequacy of these grants. The Hon'ble the Finance Member is determined to show his practical sympathy with educational schemes. To satisfy the demand for the spread of education he proposes to erect two structures of brick and mortar at Chittagong and Krishnagore. We are told every day by the Government that there is too much of general education and too little of vocational. We are told that we educate our boys beyond their station in life and thereby create discontent in the country. To remedy this Government proposes to make the students live in palatial buildings the like of which not one in a thousand will ever inhabit in after life. Every time the people cry for educational facilities the Government builds them a magnificent brick structures at a cost of lakhs. If you think that does not help the spread of education you are wrong. Gazing on the magnificent pile there arises in your heart an ardent desire to possess one like that for yourself. You realize you can only do so by getting yourself properly educated. It is not a useless building. It is an inspiration, an incentive, a symbol. Gaze at it. Live in it. Lose yourself in it and you will be great. Instead of criticising Government's action go down on your knees and thank the Lord that you have idealists as your rulers.

Maulvi RAJIB UDDIN TARAFDAR spoke in Bengali. The English translation of which is as follows:—

Sir, in the coming year's Budget great attention has been paid to the police as usual. This item alone devours a fifth of the total expenditure of the whole province. But in passing the estimates the people of the country who live in the villages have not got their adequate shares. In an agricultural country like ours most of the money should be spent for the improvement of agriculture and bettering the condition of the agriculturists. The town people have got some money. Higher

and secondary education have received their shares, but only a lakh has been provided for the primary education of the people who are hardly in a position to pay for education. Free and compulsory primary education should at once be provided for.

The waterways have also been neglected. The holy Karatoa and Brahmaputra in my constituency are no longer flowing rivers. Water-hyacinth has choked the surface of all waterways and it is a pity that the Government have allotted only Rs. 25,000 for its eradication which is not enough even for clearing one river.

The crying need of the villages is the scarcity of water but only a paltry sum of two lakhs and a half has been provided for 85,000 villages.

Public health has been neglected and all that has been done is to spend for the paraphernalia. No medicines for the poor, no relief in their epidemics have been provided.

It is a pity that much money has been squandered for the urban people and very little has been provided for villagers who form the vast majority of population.

Mr. PRASANNA DEB RAIKAT: I cannot resist the temptation of making a few observations with regard to the palpable injustice done to the transferred side of the Budget estimate for 1925-26 presented by the Hon'ble the Finance Member on behalf of Government before you for your consideration, though I am fully aware as is every other member of the House of the fate that awaits the suggestions and observations of ours and the value set upon them by our benign Government. To tell you the truth, Sir, I was very reluctant to speak anything on this subject for reasons which are well known to the members. But as it has become a custom to say something on this occasion I am compelled to trouble you for a few minutes for the sake of duty with the hackneyed observations and remarks which we have been making since the inauguration of the Reforms without any consideration whatsoever on the part of the Government.

It passes my understanding, Sir, why the Government makes this show of sham discussion of the Budget when they are determined not to pay any heed to decided public opinion and to give effect to any of the suggestions and schemes ventilated through the accredited representatives of the people of this province. It appears to me, Sir, that the whole proceedings from the beginning to the end of the Budget discussion is a mere farce in view of the fact that the people of this country have got no control over the purse to which they wholly contribute and the Governor can restore any item of the Budget even if it is rejected by a majority of votes in the Council.

Let us now take a few concrete examples and see what has been provided in the present Budget to give effect to the resolutions passed in those cases unanimously by this House:-

Firstly, the desirability of importing stud bulls from foreign country and breeding high class cattle which are going to be extinct in this province and at the same time making arrangements for pasture ground was impressed upon the Government from time to time in this Council. But the Government has altogether turned a deaf ear to this urgent, popular demand and have not provided a single farthing in this coming year's Budget for this purpose. Further nothing has been provided in the Budget under discussion for ameliorating the condition of the poor agriculturists who are the backbone of society and of the State and who constitute more than 90 per cent. of the population in this province. I find, Sir, that the major portion of the expenditure under the head "Agriculture" has been provided for the pay and allowances of the officers of this department. I ask, Sir, with all seriousness, have these highly paid officials been able to do any good to the agriculturists up to the present moment? If my friend the Hon'ble the Finance Member cares to go to any of the Bengal villages, the helpless condition of the agriculturists and the neglected condition of the lands under their charge will, I think, speak volumes about the result of the policy towards it.

Secondly, we have heard from many platforms from the highest authority of this province about the waging of holy war against ignorance of the masses of this province, which, according to that authority, is the only means of salvation of people and, therefore, preparations for which will have to be taken up in hand in right earnest at all costs But, Sir, may I ask the Hon'ble Member in charge of Finance what he has provided for waging this holy war though in support of this, there was so much trumpeting.

Thirdly, look at the provision made for public health and compare it with those made for general administration and police and it will be quite apparent that considering the vastness of the area and the number of people it will have to cover and also the vital importance of this matter the paltry sum of Rs. 26,00,000 and odd is nothing. Here, Sir, we are faced with the question of life and death. It is a well-known fact how the people of this province are dying by thousands every year of malaria, kala-azar and other such kindred diseases and how the people of the villages suffer for want of pure drinking water, good road, etc., yet the Government will not care for all these. They are over anxious to administer these dying people and keep law and order.

Lastly, no attempt has been made in the Budget for solving the all-engrossing problem of unemployment in the province, the flowers of our province are rotting for want of proper scopes, for not utilising their latent faculties. To my mind it seems to be the root-cause of all the evils of the present day and unless and until these stored-up energies of our youths are directed in a proper channel and given sufficient scope

for free expressions there is bound to come ruin upon them or revolution in the country due to poverty. No provision has been made in the Budget in this direction—either in the shape of helping indigenous industries and trade or in giving facilities to our young men to start the same.

I can cite many instances of this sort of palpable injustice done to the transferred subjects in the coming year's Budget. But I stop here as the fact has been sufficiently brought home to the Government by my friend, Sir Provash Chunder Mitter and other speakers going before me.

There is a well-known maxim "that one should cut his coat according to his cloth," but the Government in framing the Budget has wilfully managed to forget the same maxim and is recklessly proceeding to incur expenditure without taking at all into consideration the sources from which the amount will be supplied. The people have been taxed to their utmost capacity and have been totally ruined in their health and wealth and their life-blood the Government is going to spend for keeping up their prestige.

It is a pity that the Government find sufficient money for the happiness and all sorts of luxuries of their officials and not a *cowrie* for keeping the wolf from the door of the dying nation.

I need not trouble my friends any more on the subject They have heard enough of it from the former speakers.

Maulvi AFTAB HOSSAIN JOARDAR: Sir, the Government has three principal sources of revenue under the heads Land Revenue, Excise and Stamps which yield 8 crores of rupees out of a total of 10. The Bengal High Court Reports show that in 10 years from 1913-22 the Government realised in connection with civil litigation a total sum of Rs. 15 crores with a clear profit of 8½ crores (after deduction of charges) from a people who are about the poorest in the world. An increase of 10 lakhs in our revenues from the Stamps shows an increasing demand of British justice and the country must be happier for it.

The Hon'ble the Finance Member has silenced all criticism by anticipating the cry that Government is exploiting the vice of drink and drugs to secure revenue. Nevertheless, the increase of about Rs. 5 lakhs from the ordinary sources of excise revenue points to the still happier mood the country is gradually drifting to.

There is yet another source untapped why does not the Government try it? May I suggest a means in all seriousness? The Permanent Settlement of 1793 was based on a gross misunderstanding of the traditional land revenue system of India. The Government now gets only about 2 crores from this arrangement, while the tenants have to pay five times as much. This huge amount equal to the whole income

of the Government neither benefits the people nor the State, but is wasted on the maintenance of luxurious parasites.

Beginning from the Vedic times up till the advent of the British power, the peasants of India were regarded as proprietors. There were no sub-infeudation and endless chain of middlemen's heirarchy devouring all the profits of the tiller of the soil. The State received a share of the produce or equivalent thereof, under an unwritten contract of giving protection to crops and help their growth by offering facilities of irrigation, etc. The zemindar was only the collector of this revenue. The declaration of the Permanent Settlement of 1793 by Lord Cornwallis should be regarded as a national disaster of greater consequence than even the Battle of Plassey. It has been rightly called by Justice Field: "The most extensive act of confiscation that ever was perpertrated in any country." This confiscation must be undone before any relief to our finances and to our masses can be given. I do not advocate fresh confiscation to undo this confiscation. The Permanent Settlement can be undone as once suggested to me by Sir Provash Chunder Mitter, who is himself a landholder, through a cleverly devised system of purchase by the State. The next step should be the settlement of land along the lines of old Indian village community system. This will also save the bulk of zemindars who have been ruined financially by constant division and interminable litigation. Any number of amendments in the Bengal Tenancy Act will only increase, as they have already increased, litigation in geometrical progression. A bold stroke of policy may yet save the country from ruin and release a fresh source of national income which is now being practically wasted.

No fresh taxation under the present circumstances should be taken recourse to. The root-cause of all evils is the poverty of the masses who mostly live on agriculture and are the victims of exploitation of the foreigner, the zemindar, the money-lender, the middlemen profiteer, the lawyer and a host of others. The late Mr. R. C. Dutt after a thorough examination arrived at the conclusion that the twin causes of the growing poverty of the people of India are the high demand of revenue on land and the virtual extinction of India's secondary industry of spinning and weaving. Dr. Besant in a speech delivered at Delhi on September 15, 1924, also says:

I have long urged that the disappearance of village industries and of village self-government and communal holding of the village land were the chief causes of the terrible poverty of the masses and that the restoration of these was essential not only to prosperity but to Swaraj.

To quote Dr. Radhakamal Mukherji:

Our land system must be rationalised in order that no family suffers imprisonment with hard labour in one-fourth or one-eighth of an acre of land. The problem of an agricultural proletariat is fast becoming acute. There arises the further danger of the

theory of the urban proletariat being inculcated among the peasantry and this already portends to be a serious social and political menace. This social crisis cannot be prevented without some land adjustment and rehabilitation of some form of real village self-government.

From all statistics available this fact is established that an agriculturist's family of five has to be maintained on an average with the produce of a little more than 6 bighas of land. The produce of such a holding is valued at not more than Rs. 150 in a jute district and not more than Rs. 120 in a rice district. It is out of this income that 77 per cent. of our total population and almost cent. per cent. in our villages have to meet not merely their physical wants but also to pay rent and other direct and indirect taxes. Consequently, it is no surprise that the standard of living of the peasants should be so low and a large majority of them should be under chronic indebtedness.

It has been rightly pointed out that "the break up of the village community has spelt agricultural decline." The disuse of the equitable regulations as regards meadows, pasture land and irrigation channels as well as the supersession of the rights of village communities have meant a weakening of the economic position of the peasantry. The creation of landlordism, both of the superior and the inferior grades and the break up of the peasant proprietorship and village system in India have also led to an unfair distribution of the profits of agriculture.

The emancipation of the lower grades of cultivators below the legal peasant line is an insistent problem to-day, which ought to be tackled boldly in order that we might prevent the conflict between higher and the lower peasantry as has been going on in Germany and in Russia. The dim rumblings of a peasant class consciousness, already audible in some parts of India betoken a crisis in our economic history which must now be faced with caution and sagacity.

Real democracy in India is incompatible with the increase of a class of landless proletariat. The way towards Swaraj is a devious path but this difficulty had not hitherto attracted the attention it deserved, *viz.*, that there cannot be any true Swaraj, unless we had the proper utilisation and equitable distribution of land resources.

Maulvi EKRAMUL HUQ: I shall not indulge in the language of convention and either shower praises on the Hon'ble the Finance Member, or sympathise with him like my friend Khan Bahadur S. Mahboob Aley or heap abuses on his devoted head. I do not propose either to talk of the iniquities of the Meston Award or the yet greater iniquities perpetrated by the officials who have the knack of dividing whatever money they could save, for paying higher wages to themselves and their Indian comrades, leaving very little or nothing to be returned to the owner—the people of the country. I shall not talk of Reforms and its effect on the country. Suffice it to say that whatever measures

of Reforms were undertaken in the past they benefited the few and not the many. I hope I shall not be misunderstood, I want Reforms, and more and more Reforms, and I want that these Reforms should make the people supreme and bring Swaraj—the Government of the people by the people and for the people themselves. I had even determined not to talk of the injustice and the iniquities that are being perpetrated on the 95 per cent. of the children of the soil by the zamindars and the usurers, for I have talked and talked about these for the last four years, but with very little success. I know the harrowing tales of their miseries seldom reach the Government and when they know of these they have neither the will nor the power to lift their little finger to remedy these for drawing their inspirations from only the unthinking portion of the landed aristocracy, and reinforced by their bulk, they have as in the past, failed to do justice to the peasantry, in spite of the repeated demands of the people and some of their representatives. Though against my wishes, I think it necessary to come to the rescue of my friend Mr. K. C. Ray Chaudhuri and controvert the remarks made by my friend Kumar Shib Shekhareswar Ray. The Kumar has said that as a nominated member of this Council Mr. Ray Chaudhuri has no business to pose himself as a *bandhu* of the raiyats. Let me inform the Kumar that any person who has the good of the peasantry at heart is a *bandhu* of the raiyats and deserves their respect Mr. K. C. Ray Chaudhuri is not a parasite even if he does not pay income tax, while the Kumar as a zemindar, pays a good deal. I may remind the Kumar Saheb that it is not his money that the Kumar Saheb pays to the coffers of the Government, but it is the money—the hard-earned money—of the peasantry that he pays and Mr. K. C. Ray Chaudhuri is as much interested in that money as the Kumar Saheb is. Sir, we have been told by Kumar Saheb that he and persons of his class became zemindars, as they purchased the zemindaries of others and as such they are the rightful owners of what they possess. Let me point out that he raised a hue and cry in the Press as soon as he found that a resolution was about to be moved by my friend Babu Hemanta Kumar Sarkar to the effect that a Committee be formed to inquire and report as to who were the actual proprietors of the soil—the zemindars or cultivators? What was it in the resolution that set the Kumar Saheb thinking and made him to issue a frantic appeal to his brother zemindars to unite against the tenants? Was it not the idea that if a Committee were formed and an inquiry made it would be found—proved to the hilt—that the landed aristocracy were not in fact the owners of the soil, while the poor cultivators were and are? If the Kumar and his brother zemindars had come in as purchasers and they had possessed the lands as purchasers from persons who themselves had absolutely no right over these lands, they could not rightly, equitably and justly possess any right or title to hold these lands. But I am not one of those

who is averse to the permanent settlement. The evil is there and I do not want to be iniquitous to the zemindars; but a solution should be found which should be equitable to both the parties. The Kumar has said further that Mr. Ray Chaudhuri is not supported in his pleadings by the representatives of the tenantry. He forgets what I and others did and said in the Council for the last four years; and even to-day the flood-gate of oratory would have burst had not many members been under party discipline.

Sir, members have talked about the heavy toll, preventible diseases levy, year in and year out, on our kith and kin and I shall not dilate upon that. But I shall very earnestly draw the attention of the House to a matter before which all these pale into insignificance. I mean free and compulsory education. I ask Government and the people to consider if they should not all at once make arrangements to educate every man from 6 years of age to 60. Those in Britain, and those of the Britons who are here and who rule over the destiny of India, say that they are trustees of the people. But how have they discharged their trust? Have they made their wards to understand their own interests? Have they made them fit to offer their grateful thanks to their trusees for the care they have taken of their belongings for the space of about two centuries? I am sure Government would realize that they have not discharged their duties properly, and they stand condemned before the world, and what is more before their conscience, for their culpable neglect in that direction. But they should be sparingly condemned and even excused, for, we Indians who are the intelligentia of the country, stand thrice condemned for not giving this question our sole attention. Look at the University, the colleges, the hostels, the Darbhanga building, the post graduate department of the University, the expensive Chairs that have been founded one of which is adorned by an Hon'ble Member of this Council, all point to the conclusion that our countrymen consider education to be the property of the few and the fruits of education their sole patrimony. Is it not deplorable that administrators high and low, Europeans and Indians all talk about the democratisation of knowledge and in the same breath issue frantic appeals for funds for the post graduate departments only. The appeals from Bengali gentlemen are understandable for they have friends and relations to provide in the various departments, but it is unthinkable why Europeans should become their dancing puppets and instead of taking up mass education as their war cry, should be whining for class benefit. I do not decry higher education. Higher and yet higher education we must have, but we must not be developing only a small limb and neglect altogether the whole body.

I would on behalf of the dumb millions of my countrymen appeal to Government and the thinking portion of our countrymen to think of the masses and the masses only. Bring them to light and all the

pestilential diseases that now prey upon them will vanish with the darkness of ignorance. You will be able to cut down a very large portion of your expenses on the Nation Saving Department, for, which knowledge the nation will know how to save itself.

The English people shall have nothing to fear from the educated masses. Gratitude is the chief ingredient of the Indian character and Indians will take care of the British interests as they would take care of their own. You may say you have no money. In this connection may I ask the Hon'ble Mr. Donald to inform the House as to the extent of India's indebtedness? As no answer is forthcoming I think I may be fairly correct if I say that it runs into many thousands of crores of rupees. Will the Government be altogether bankrupt if it were to take a loan of Rs. 2 crores every year for the space of 10 years only and start day and night schools for young and old alike for every two villages in the land? This will educate the people within five years, and rest assured the masses will never let their benefactors down. As I think mass education is the only remedy for all our ills, I bring this to the notice of Government with all the earnestness I can command.

SHAH SYED EMDADUL HAQ spoke in Bengali. The English translation of which is given below:—

Sir, for the last four years I have pointed out several defects in the budgets and asked for their amendment, but have they ever been amended? The failure of the suggestions repeatedly made has filled me with shame and what else is it but a matter of shame also for Government?

"Water always takes a downward course" as the poet has said. Similarly the peasant occupying a lower level as regards education and economic condition, the current of sufferings and pain flows down towards him. It is not an exaggeration to say that in the budget no attention has been paid to the removal of the wants, miseries and hardships of them and their villages. It is the peasant who supplies food and cloth to the world, but they have no food in their stomachs, nor any cover on their backs. He comes prematurely into the grim jaws of death on account of poverty, want of food, disease and grief. Nobody turns his eyes towards them? Many a member has been returned by their votes, but the minds of how many of these members now turn back towards them? And when high Government officials go to the mufussal, are not their visits entirely taken up with sight-seeing in towns and cities and dinner parties? Have they ever seen the deplorable condition of the villages?

Though the raiyats are the producers of food and cloth, they do not in fact enjoy what they produce. It is not an exaggeration to say that, roughly speaking, one-third goes into the pocket of the land-owners, one-third is spent in payment of different taxes for the salaries of the chaukidars, the police and other Government officers, and to meet

various other expenses, such as the costs of law-suits, stamps and court-fees, railway and steamer fares and ferry charges and one-third goes into the coffers of different classes of men, such as the money-lenders, pleaders, muktears, merchants, carpenters, blacksmiths, etc. A large number among them pass their days often without two meals a day, without any warm clothing in winter and by borrowing money, the debts of most of the villagers now equal to the value of their properties. And many among them are compelled on this account to escape to the hills having lost their houses and lands. In every direction the path of ruin of the raiyats is paved. Only the foreign merchants make profit from the jute of Bengal. The Government of India also get large revenues from various taxes. But the gain of the raiyats is that they are approaching death, by being attacked by malaria and other diseases. The cause of this wide prevalence of diseases is that on account of jute-steeping the climate of the country has become vitiated. Something might have been done towards improving the sanitation of the villages if Government gave a portion of the revenue they make from jute. But no steps have been taken in that direction; on the contrary there is the demand of the India Government of sixty-three lakhs of rupees, chargeable on the revenues of Bengal, and over and above in the eagerness to give effect to the recommendations of the Lee Commission.

I feel called upon to make a few observations upon the passage at arms during the budget discussion between two of my colleagues in this House on the subject of the relations between land-holder and tenants. My friend the Kumar Sahib should remember that I too am a zamindar and a voter of the landholders' constituency and that my interests are bound up with the interests of the zamindars. But I cannot by any means refrain from speaking out what is just, and as I have been elected by the cultivators and have been returned to the House with the largest number of Moslem votes in all the districts of Bengal, silence in the present instance will amount to treachery. From the Vedic age down to the end of the Mughal rule it was the cultivator who was the real proprietor of the land. That proprietary right has been taken away by the Permanent Settlement. At the time of the Settlement the landholder enjoyed merely a tenth part of the rent collections paying about 90 per cent. as Government revenue, but at the present time that income of the landholders has increased many times. From the figures given by Kumar Shib Shekhareswar Ray it appears that the income has increased more than four times (13 crores against 3 crores of Government revenue). The revenue of Bengal is excessively high in comparison with the revenue of the other provinces; it is nearly thirty or thirty-one crores, out of which the India Government appropriate twenty and a half crores by way of taxation. It is a fact that the India Government realise this amount of twenty crores and a half from the 4 crores and 70 lakhs of people in Bengal, that is to say

Rs. 5 per head, and 34 crores from the other 20 crores of people in all all other provinces, that is to say, a little above a rupee and a half per head; and this is also a fact that while the landholders pay three annas and six pies for every rupee of their income to Government, the rest of the people pay only half an anna for every rupee of this income. It cannot be also denied that the cultivators of Bengal are superior to those of the other provinces and that the superiority is due mainly to the Permanent Settlement. Even now the rent payable to the zamindar is on an average a rupee or a rupee and four annas per *bigha*, while the rent is much higher in Government *khas mahals*. There is not sufficient reason to believe that the abolition of the Permanent Settlement will be beneficial and it is only the alien Government who are likely to benefit by it. The India Government are making a further demand for 63 lakhs after appropriating 20 crores and a half out of the thirty or thirty one crores of the present revenue of Bengal; who will be able to prevent them if they appropriate also the income of the landowners after the abolition of the Permanent Settlement? But should not we zamindars consider the fact that while we are fortunate enough to live in luxury enjoying all the delicacies of the table there are human beings like ourselves who, though producers of food and cloth, are still dying of disease and grief crying for food? While Government are outsiders, we belong to the country; if Government are not kind to these poor people, why should we be annoyed when there is a talk of giving something from our share to these village people who are our fellow countrymen? Unless we can show some example of such small sacrifices, unless we agree to suffer a little temporary loss like this, what will be our condition when in future this almost lifeless peasant community will awaken.

I have come nearly to the end of my time of 15 minutes and so I shall give up this topic and finish after dealing with a few other extremely important topics.

As the debts of the peasants have heavily increased and the rate of interest on loans is exorbitantly high, they do not get any more loans from the Indian money-lenders. Unable to procure any loan they are compelled to starve and grow weak, and being unable over and above it to procure seeds and agricultural implements they cannot till their lands properly which contribute to the further ruin of the country. It is necessary for this reason to provide for sufficient agricultural loans. Government have allotted nearly 3 crores of rupees for the nation-building departments; even if so much is not given, the establishment charges should be reduced and money allotted for these works which vitally affect the raiyats. Special attention should be given to sanitation, removal of the scarcity of water, and prevention of such diseases as malaria, etc. If the country is depopulated what will become of the

Government and of the land-holders? More than a crore of rupees is allotted to education, but the grant for primary education is quite insignificant. Compulsory free primary education is urgently required so as to open the eyes of the rural people and to enable them to depend on themselves against others. The schools and colleges in the town do not help to bring about the real salvation of the rural people; they are only paving the path for service and slavery and are becoming instrumental in the sale of conscience to a class, community or individual. Arrangement has been made whereby most of the cultivators can, by their votes, send representatives to the Legislative Council and other public bodies, but owing to their want of education, real representatives have been elected only in very few places. It is for want of education that they fail to make good use of the small advantages given them by the Bengal Tenancy Act, on the contrary they are deceived by being given a receipt for Rs. 5 when they have paid Rs. 25. When Government can have money for the decoration of cities and the neighbouring places, and even for family quarters for married police officers and for the Governor's Band, it will not do to say that they have no money when such life and death problems are concerned. It was promised that the major portion of the additional revenue derived from the increase of the value of stamps and court-fees would be given for nation-building works, but it has not been actually done. It is always said that there is no money. My time is up, the bell has rung, but I pray for time to say briefly on a few urgent matters.

Owing to the breaches in the embankment of the river Gumti in Comilla, flood occurs almost every year which causes serious damage to crops and agricultural work. Taxes have been collected under the Embankment Act and on several occasions I have asked questions with regard to it, but I find that nothing has been done in this matter to which I draw the attention of the Member-in-Charge. Kasba, in Tippera, is an extremely unhealthy place. Almost all officers fall ill and are transferred to other stations. Government also admitted this in answer to my interpellations and said that Kasba would be transferred to Brahmanbaria, but the transfer was not made. But if the Court of the Munsif is transferred from there, measures must be adopted for saving the lives of the inhabitants of that place. The want of culverts in the railway embankments is one of the main causes of the unhealthy condition of this place; so special attention should be paid to the matter.

A resolution of mine in regard to the destruction of the water-hyacinth was passed by this Council. This water-weed is ruining the country. The sum of twenty-five thousand rupees provided in the budget is too small for the purpose. So more money should be allotted and an attempt should be made simultaneously throughout Bengal, according to the resolution, to eradicate it.

Another resolution moved by me asking for special grant for the education of the depressed classes was also passed and the amount of such grant was included in the budget, but in the budget for this year the money has not been provided for. But a grant should be made for this purpose.

The school established at Comilla by Nawab Har Kannesa Saheba, to whom I am related, was made over to Government. In reply to the resolution moved by me for removing the wants of the school, Government admitted the necessity. Two years have passed since then, and I see that no money has been allotted for it even in this year's budget. I hope that some provision for help will be made this year.

The Medical School at Chittagong is another subject for consideration. On several occasions I asked questions and moved resolutions with regard to it. Though my last resolution in connection with it was defeated by a narrow majority of one or two votes, Government admitted the urgency of the matter. I hope attention will also be given to this.

As I cannot hope to finish saying what I have got to say about the copyists, the typists and other matters, I take my seat. But before taking my seat I say again that if Government have no desire to be guided by public opinion, would it not be proper for them not to make such a pompous display by holding *darbars* and *majlises*?

Khan Bahadur MIRZA SUJAAT ALI BEG: Sir, the framing of a Budget is a difficult task, and, more often than not, rather a thankless one. The Government of Bengal are not in a flourishing condition financially, and the Hon'ble the Finance Member has shown us the position with commendable frankness, and, if I may say so, he has endeavoured to try and make both ends meet with considerable labour and ability. Still, the result is not wholly satisfactory, nor can it possibly be, under the unfavourable condition imposed upon the province by the Meston Award. This unfair levy should be suppressed once and for all, and the House cannot but view with satisfaction that the Government of Bengal are working strenuously to attain this object.

It is true that very substantial savings were anticipated as the result of the activities of the Bengal Retrenchment Committee, but it must be remembered that the savings would not accrue at once. Indeed, all expectations under this head have been dissipated by the fact that salaries all round must increase under the new time-scales of pay for both the Indian and the European services. This is hardly the fault of the Finance Member: the bill must be paid and the Budget has to provide funds for the purpose.

We are all intensely interested in the growth and prosperity of the

transferred departments, and there is no uncertain sense of disappointment that more has not been done. The Finance Member urges that it has not been possible to proceed further until the financial position is more settled, *i.e.*, until the remission of the provincial contribution to the Imperial Exchequer has been secured.

This may be so, but it must not be forgotten that the nation is impatiently waiting to be better fed, better educated, improved industrially, and made to live under healthier and happier conditions. This is the goal which the people hope for and which every Government strives, or should strive, to attain. On the other hand, it is well to remember both in this House and beyond it that Rome was not built in a day.

It is satisfactory to note that the grant for Education has been augmented by about 7 lakhs. This augurs well. The increase is one which, we hope, will expand from year to year until we reach the standards which prevail in civilised countries elsewhere. The provisions made for Public Health has, unfortunately, been reduced, and here I think the House will share the regret of the Finance Member. Our province is unfortunately one that is swept by malaria and inundated with bad water. These unfortunate conditions of life give rise to many public ills, and we should all like to see the organizations for bettering these conditions maintained and strengthened. Agriculture is another important head, important to the millions of people in Bengal who live by it and on it. Present needs must be supplied and impediments removed. Agricultural education is, therefore, of very real importance and should be pushed on as much as possible. The attitude of Government in the matter is, no doubt, sympathetic and as helpful as their finances will allow. We earnestly hope for better times in order that this important branch of the administration may secure its full share of the public revenues.

I do not think I can omit a topic of great interest and importance—I mean industries or in other words, the establishment of technical schools. The Finance Member's remarks under this head are somewhat short and disappointing. He speaks of a grant to the Calcutta Blind School for the construction of a building, etc., and also of a provision for the construction of a Research Laboratory.

The industrial development of the province surely means more than this. One has only to turn to Foreign Nations, both near and distant, to see what they think of technical and industrial education, and the means they adopt to spread and develop it. In Japan, for instance, there are high technical schools at certain centres, while a large number of elementary schools are spread all over the country. The schools are of different kinds and impart knowledge in each branch, for example, agricultural, industrial, nautical, engineering, and so on. The course

of study extends to a long period. For the establishment of similar conditions in this country, patient organisation and much money will be needed. We cannot hope to get all we want in a day. The resources of the province must first be stabilized and freed from unjust imposts and, gradually, as we put our house in order, the Government will be able to find the money for our needs. We cannot do much with a small cash balance and, speaking for myself, I feel bound to express my appreciation of the Hon'ble the Finance Member's earnest, if partially successful, efforts to do what he could in the circumstances to feed the transferred departments. It is safe to say that no party will be comfortable or satisfied unless and until the Meston Award is given its final quietus by the Imperial Government. The Bengal Government have sent up a very able representative in the person of Mr. Marr, and we anxiously await the result of the negotiations now proceeding.

If Mr. Marr is unhappily not successful in proving Bengal's case for the final and permanent remission of the contribution, it may be necessary for this House to urge other measures for the consideration of His Excellency the Governor in Council.

Maulvi BASAR MAHAMMAD: Sir, the hon'ble members will be surprised to learn that there is at least one in this House who has driven a plough with his own hands to help his family and to meet the expenses of his own education. From a cultivator to a pleader of the district Court and thence a member of this distinguished House—this is the history of the life of my humble self. So I may ask for some indulgence of this assembly when I speak on the weal and woes of the villagers.

The Member in charge of the Police Department said the other day "it is gratifying to me to find that in spite of lurid speeches and writings, people in the mufassal do, in fact, regard the police not as oppressors but as protectors and they appreciate the advantages of living near a police station." He referred to the most heated protests, by telegram or by memorial, against the abolition of police stations in certain parts of the province. But, Sir, I have a shrewd suspicion that the people of the locality must have been made to do so by the local guardians of law and order. From personal experience of police in my district I can assert that people will dance to death if all the police stations were abolished one fine morning.

In a country where the executive Government is not responsible to the people it is monstrous to increase police expenditure. I think the experience is general, if not universal, of police not behaving well with the public. In a law case in which I appeared for the defence the witnesses for the prosecution broke down under cross-examination. The result was that not only the witnesses but also myself incurred the

displeasure of the investigatiug officer and the Inspector in charge had the audacity of threatening my relations with due consequence if I continued to defend the accused. I may tell the House, Sir, what his name is——.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I will not allow you to bring a personal charge of this kind against anybody. That I think is not fair to the person. You cannot accuse anybody in this Council. You may protest generally against anybody's conduct but you cannot bring personal charges against anybody. You must withdraw that.

Maulvi BASAR MAHAMMAD: Very well, Sir. I spoke of the incident to the District Magistrate but he was simply helpless. That is, Sir, where we stand with reference to the police. Instances are not rare in which trying Magistrates are threatened in cases their decision are not to the liking of the police.

Sir, I shall make certain observations on the Agricultural Budget. Being myself an agriculturist I may boldly affirm that this white elephant of a department has no justification to exist and it does greater harm than good to the actual tiller of the soil. This department acts as the Intelligence Branch of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce. The agricultural officers are there to supply statistics and figures to the department which help the foreigners in exploiting the agriculturist in a scientific manner. By jugglery of figures a deficit district is shown to be a surplus district and food grains are exported for the manufacture of intoxicants, while the producers suffer from chronic starvation. A sum of Rs. 6,000 has been allotted to improve the date-sugar industry of Bengal. We come to learn that this amount will be spent in engaging an investigating officer. So all the sugar of this allotment really goes to him and Bengal's date-sugar industry stands where it has stood. If the Government had bought date-sugar worth this amount and distributed the quantity amongst the hon'ble members of this House, the money would have gone to the producers who would thus have been indirectly encouraged and we could have a taste of what yet could be produced from the dry date trees of Bengal.

Sir, the thousand and one maladies the nation is suffering from are only the symptoms of a disease. A few lakhs have been given to the nation-building departments—but that will only treat the symptoms and not the disease. Cut at the root of all evils and all the symptoms will disappear.

Any amount of taxation to remove the crying need of drinking water will not help us. According to the estimate of Mr. G. S. Dutt 17 crores of rupees are necessary to remove the water scarcity in Bengal. The total income of the Government is only about 10 crores. So the

solution lies not in taxation but in reviving the ancient ideal of sinking tanks and wells by individuals as an act of piety and in maintaining the full and unchecked flow of rivers during the rains for the irrigation of the country.

The crime against rivers, hills and trees, and the robbery of the soil in the interest of foreign exploitation are alone responsible for all the scourages devastating our country. The disturbance of nature's law and order near the sources of rivers must be stopped at once. This will save us from water scarcity, floods, famine and malaria. The land will be fertilised and with improved methods of agriculture greater outturn will bring health and wealth to every home.

Cholera, which is responsible for several lakhs of deaths in the province, appears in an epidemic form in the villages chiefly owing to the scarcity of pure drinking water.

The problem of phthisis and leprosy has to be tackled. Dr. Muthu, the greatest of phthisis specialists, says that injections and medicines would not do any good; the increase of vitality is the only cure he has prescribed.

Prof. Radhakamal Mukherji says that the increase of leprosy in the rice tracts of Northern Madras, Orissa, South-west Bengal and the Deccan is connected with the exhaustion of soil and the deficiency of food values of rice grains.

Dr. Edwin Muir says: "In the middle ages leprosy was as common in England as it is in India to-day, but about 300 years ago it gradually disappeared as an endemic disease. There was no specific to stamp leprosy out of England; its disappearance was due to the improved general conditions of life—better food, better sanitation, better houses."

The need of the hour is stimulating the people's mind to solve their own problems by the enunciation of bold economic policies based on the traditional methods India had evolved through the experience of the ages tested in the light of modern knowledge. That alone will solve the problem—no consideration of pound, shilling, and pence, or the refusal or reduction, according to usual methods, will do us any permanent good.

Adjournment.

Babu Charu Chandra Das then began to address the House, when Maulvi Ekramul Huq drew attention to the fact that there was no quorum. On a count being taken, there was found to be no quorum and the House adjourned (1-10 P.M.) till 3 P.M. on 2nd March, 1925, at the Town Hall, Calcutta.

Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Council assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act.

THE Council met in the Council Chamber in the Town Hall, Calcutta, on Monday, the 2nd March, 1925, at 3 P.M.

Present:

The Hon'ble the President in the Chair, the four Hon'ble Members of the Executive Council and 94 nominated and elected members.

Time for sending in notices of motions for reduction of grants.

Mr. PRESIDENT (the Hon'ble Sir Evan Cotton): I have been considering the arrangement with regard to the time for sending in notices of motions for reduction of grants. What I propose to do is this. In regard to the reserved side, the date already notified will stand, namely, the 7th of March. With regard to the transferred subjects, the date already notified, the 7th March, stands only with regard to motions for reduction of items in the grant, but in regard to motions for reduction of the total grant for any transferred department, and for reduction of the items relating to the demand for salaries of Ministers, the time will be extended for so long as is necessary to allow members to table their motions in these matters, after consideration of the personnel of the Ministers when the appointments have been announced by His Excellency. I will have a circular sent round to members as soon as I am able to fix a date. The Council can take it from me that I will give the longest time possible with regard to this matter.

As we have certain supplementary demands this afternoon, I propose to close down the discussion on the Budget somewhere about 5-30 P.M., so that the Hon'ble the Finance Member will be in a position to reply, and after we adjourn at 6 o'clock, we can take up the demands for supplementary grants immediately after.

Oath.

Maulvi NAJMUDDIN AHMED made an affirmation of his allegiance to the Crown.

Starred Questions

(to which oral answers were given).

House-searches at Dacca.

***XXXVII. Mr. S. N. HALDAR:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble the Member in charge of the Police Department be pleased to state in reference to the searches made in the houses of Babus Monoranjan Banerji, pleader, Narendra Mohon Sen and Pratul Chandra Ganguli at Dacca—

(*i*) the time of the day when the searches were made;

(*ii*) whether the search parties were attended by search witnesses;

(*iii*) if so, what are their names, addresses and position in life; and

(*iv*) whether in carrying out their searches, the police broke open the door and entered the zenana of Babu Monoranjan Banerji at a time when no male members were present in the house?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble the Member be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the police officers and constables entered the house of Monoranjan Babu without offering their persons to be searched by anybody?

(*c*) Is it not a fact that when Mrs. Banerji protested against their conduct in forcibly entering the inner apartment especially when no male members were present, the police officer or a police officer pointed a loaded revolver at her?

MEMBER in charge of POLICE DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Sir Hugh Stephenson): (*a* (*i*) Pratul Ganguli's house 2-30 to 3 P.M., Narendra Mohon Sen's house 2-40 to 3-30 P.M., and Monoranjan Banerji's house from 2-30 to 3 P.M.

(*ii*) Yes.

(*iii*) Government do not consider it in the public interest to publish the names of the search-witnesses.

(*iv*) The police did not break open the door of the house. As the inmates did not answer a request for admittance a head constable climbed over the outer wall and opened the door of the yard from inside. The inner door was found open when the yard was entered. There were no male members present when the house was searched.

(*b*) The Additional Superintendent of Police with the Inspector and his personal guard did not wait to offer their persons for search as they were informed that some one was escaping over the back wall, and the quickest way to reach the spot was through the house. When,

however, the house was formally searched shortly afterwards, the whole search party offered their persons for search.

(c) No.

House-search of Babu Pratul Chandra Ganguli at Dacca.

*XXXVIII. **Mr. S. N. HALDAR:** Will the Hon'ble the Member in charge of the Police Department be pleased to state whether it is not a fact that—

(i) at the time of making a forced entry into the house of Babu Pratul Chandra Ganguli at Dacca in the absence of all male members of his family, Pratul Babu's sister or some lady was pushed aside by a police officer, when the lady came forward to protest against the entry into the senana; and

(ii) the old mother of Pratul Babu was threatened with violence at the point of a revolver if she did not remain quiet?

The Hon'ble Sir HUGH STEPHENSON: (i) There was no forced entry. The police entered the house in the presence of search-witnesses and of one Birendra Nath Ganguli, a resident of the house. No lady was pushed aside by any police officer.

(ii) No.

Budget of the Government of Bengal for 1925-26.

The general discussion of the Budget was then resumed.

Babu CHARU CHANDRA DAS: Sir, the hon'ble members who preceded me in this Budget discussion have dealt with almost all its outstanding features. There remains very little for me to add to what they have said. There is the usual statement of want of funds from the Government side and the usual cry of want of attention and inadequate allotment to the nation-building departments from the other side.

I am unable to congratulate the Hon'ble the Finance Member on the Budget in presenting which he made such an elaborate and eloquent speech.

Had not the amount of the Meston Award been waived by the Government of India the financial position would have been more unsatisfactory. But this gain has saved the situation to some extent at least. The Council is not going to sanction any more new taxation at least before the recommendation of the Taxation Inquiry Committee now sitting at Delhi, is published, and the province in general and the transferred departments in particular will have to work under various disabilities consequent on want of funds.

Sir Provash Chunder Mitter has clearly pointed out that the Government did not take necessary steps to give effect to the recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee nor did they put in their utmost effort to secure more convenient terms in regard to financial arrangement from the Government of India. The result is that very little improvement in the nation-building departments can be expected in the coming year. The provision made for sanitation and medical relief is scanty and though the suffering of the people from malaria, kala-azar, cholera and other preventible diseases will continue for want of more hospitals, and adequate arrangements, the police force of the country who are employed to protect the person and property only will enjoy the various amenities lavishly conferred on them.

Primary education which is the most important factor in the building up of a nation does not fare much better. Provision for a hundred additional primary schools in the villages of Bengal is nothing more than a bucketful of water on a parched field.

In a country where about 90 per cent. of the population is still illiterate the importance of primary education cannot be overstated, and the primary duty of the Government is to make primary education accessible to every individual. The Budget did not disclose an intense attempt on the part of the Government for this all-important matter, and I am at a loss to understand how the Minister in charge of the Education Department, when appointed, will pacify the country in this matter in the face of this inadequate provision made in the Budget in this direction. The Budget after all will not give the Ministers the necessary facilities to discharge their duties to the country satisfactorily and the unpopularity of the Ministry may almost be predicted whatever its personnel may be.

The next important feature of the Budget seems in my mind to be its almost ignoring of the presence of the so-called depressed or backward classes, in the matter of educational facilities—both general and technical—whose number is about 1 crore and 49 lakhs out of a total Hindu population of a little more than 2 crores, and whom I have the privilege to represent. In order to really help and encourage the spread of education amongst the backward class, a suitable provision should be made in the Budget for granting especial scholarships, freeships, etc., for the boys of the backward communities, as has already been made in the case of the Muhammadan boys. As otherwise the backward community boys stand very little chance of securing scholarships, etc., in open competition with the more advanced boys of the higher class Hindus.

In short my point is that there should be some sort of special arrangements or provisions made in the case of the backward class as a whole on the same lines as have already been made and are being made in the case of the Muhammadan boys, seeing that the existing

condition of things under the common name of Hindus or non-Muhammadans is extremely disappointing. The Hon'ble the Finance Member is surely aware of the fact that this backward class, who form the overwhelming majority of the population of the province amongst the Hindus, is labouring under many social disabilities, one of which is the reluctance or refusal on the part of the higher class Hindus to admit them into the hostels and boarding houses. The students of this backward class are, therefore, suffering great inconveniences in the matter of higher education as though the colleges in important educational centres will admit them they cannot secure accommodation at a reasonable cost, and the doors of the various Government hostels are closed against them. I understand that there is a small hostel in Amherst Street, Calcutta, subsidized by the Government but the provision there is quite inadequate to meet the growing demands of the students of this class seeking admission to the Calcutta colleges. Not to make further provision for them in this respect not only in Calcutta but also in other educational centres in the province means a denial to them of the benefits of higher education, and I personally know of students who had to give up the idea of prosecuting their studies for want of a suitable accommodation at a reasonable cost. The Budget seems to be silent on this important matter, though provision has been made for hostel-accommodation of many other classes, the number of some of which are insignificant in comparison with the population who are termed backward, suffering from various social disabilities. I find from the Budget estimate that the grant to the Kalimpong Homes has been increased by Rs. 10,000. A provision of Rs. 10,000 has been made for the construction of a barrack for Anglo-Indian students in the Bengal Engineering College. A sum of Rs. 61,000 has been provided for a new building for the Entally Orphanage. A hostel for Muhammadan students is going to be built at Chittagong at a cost of Rs. 82,000. The Barisal Government High School has been fortunate in securing a grant of Rs. 14,000 for the extension of its hostels for Muhammadan students. The Muhammadan students of Rajshahi are going to be provided with a fund of Rs. 6,000 for the progress of construction of their hostels there. And various other schools and colleges both for boys and girls have been fortunate in securing various grants, not quite illiberal, in comparison with the total cost for education of the province for additional accommodation for their Hindu students. The Council must be aware of the fact that these accommodations provided in the various educational institutions in the name of the Hindu students are enjoyed by the higher class Hindu students only and the students of the backward class are scrupulously shut out from these hostels. I do not grudge the facilities granted to these institutions mentioned above and I congratulate them on their good fortune in securing these facilities; but at the same time I fail to understand why the backward classes of the province who out-number

the higher class Hindus and form about three-fourths of the total Hindu population in Bengal have been relegated in this way to the cold shade of neglect.

The progress of the country largely depends on the education of the masses and this so-called depressed class forms the great mass of the population. Unless facilities are given to this class in the matter of education real progress of the country will be jeopardised. Therefore, I earnestly request the Hon'ble the Finance Member to consider if a suitable provision in the Budget can be made to give facilities to the students of the backward community in the matter of accommodation in all big educational centres of this province. There is still time for doing so and I hope I have not drawn the attention of the Government in this matter in vain.

Babu SURENDRA NATH RAY: Sir, for the last three working days we have heard a good deal about the provincial contribution of Bengal. The heavy burden of 63 lakhs of rupees was removed from our shoulders, but we have been told that it has been taken off only for three years. When a burden is taken off only for three years, *i.e.*, temporarily, the result is that neither Government nor the members of this Council could suggest any improvements in which there will be recurring expenditure, because unless we know our financial position correctly, we could not launch upon any great undertaking. It is, therefore, our duty to agitate not only for the total remission of this contribution, but, also, as has been suggested by my friend Sir Provash Chunder Mitter the other day, we must try to have a slice out of the export duty on jute. I put this suggestion before Lord Meston when he came to India and when I was deputed by the Government of Bengal as a witness before the Meston Committee. I then said "this may necessitate the division of such portion of revenue from Indian customs for purposes of administration, though left as a subject of Indian legislation; we propose, therefore, that the export duty on jute should be separated from the Customs proper and provincialised." That was in the beginning of 1920. Then, again, in July, 1920, I moved a resolution in this Council in which I said that the export duty on jute should also be given to Bengal, because it was not an income from Customs, as had been erroneously suggested. Again, on the 19th February, 1924, I moved another resolution in this Council in which I said that Lord Meston thought that to give Bengal the proceeds of the jute export tax would be equitable and in consonance with Bengal's sentiments. It will be our duty to carry on the agitation not only in the Legislative Assembly, but also before Parliament and the Secretary of State, because this export duty on jute is our just and legal due. In 1920, when I gave my evidence before the Meston Committee, the export duty on jute was 2,38,00,000;

now it is nearly 3½ crores of rupees. It is a purely provincial revenue, and as such we have a fair, equitable and just right to claim it.

There is one matter in connection with this Budget which I want to point out and it is this. We are very thankful to Government for having increased the pay of teachers in secondary schools. They are a very poor class, having no additional income like many other officers of Government whose pay has been increased to a very large extent.

There is another point which my friends have not noticed probably because they devoted their attention to criticising the Hon'ble Mr. Donald's speech and not the Budget itself. I do not know whether this portion (page 49) of the financial statement has attracted, as it ought to have, the attention of my friends. There you will find that a system of charging fees from out-patients and in-patients of the Government hospitals in Calcutta was introduced from the 1st January, 1923, and from the same month the rates of fees realised from the in-patients in the Presidency General and the Calcutta Medical College Hospitals were raised. From the 7th July, 1923, however, the realisation of fees from out-patients was discontinued. The realisation of fees from the in-patients of the Campbell and Sambhunath Pandit Hospitals has been discontinued this year, but the fees payable by the in-patients of the Medical College Hospital have been made optional. I would suggest that these fees should be abolished altogether.

There is another point which has not been dealt with by any one in this House, nor is it to be found anywhere in the Budget estimates, and it is this. It is probably known to many of my friends that there was an Agricultural College at Sabour in Bhagulpur to which the Government of Bengal used to make a substantial contribution. The students of that college were mostly Bengalis, I mean residents of Bengal, but this college has recently been abolished. Bengal is an agricultural country. Is it not our duty to ask Government to establish an agricultural college in this province? I think Madras has got an agricultural college of her own. If that be so, and Bengal is more of an agricultural country than Madras, then why should we not insist upon Government establishing a college in Bengal? Government has now got the money and should begin the work at once. It is a necessity for Bengal, and it will offer employment to hundreds of our young men. I would, therefore, suggest that, now that the Sabour Agricultural College has been abolished, and the boys of Bengal have nowhere to go to receive agricultural education, it is the duty of Government to establish a good agricultural college in Bengal.

Khan Bahadur Maulvi ABDUS SALAM: Sir, I had no mind to take part in the general discussion of the Budget presented by the Hon'ble the Member in charge of Finance, as it seemed to me to be neither a gladsome nor doleful Budget, but a Budget of mingled hope and

fear—a Budget of glorious uncertainties and hypothetical schemes. And, therefore, if one had to speak of it, he would have to join in the general chorus of mournful lamentation over the financial distress of Bengal, once proudly known in the Moghul period as the *jinattul bilad* or "paradise of provinces," but now reduced to the humble position of a supplicant for charity from the Government of India. One might be inclined to exclaim in the language of the poet: "Oh, the same, but now how fallen." Yet with a bold stroke of policy and the desire to get out of old ruts, the financial position of Bengal might be retrieved and Bengal restored once again to its time-old position of the premier Indian province, flowing with milk and honey and with its people immune from the deadly ravages of malaria, cholera and kala-azar. But the Budget sadly lacks any indication of any such bold stroke of policy, and it is the old humdrum Budget with income stable and expenditure swelling from year to year, especially in the Departments of Police, Law and Order. Yet the application of past knowledge to the present-day conditions might appreciably reduce the expenditure in the Departments of Police, Law and Order. Legislative action making every zemindar (as in Moghul days) responsible for the maintenance of peace and order in his estate would go a great way in this direction. The wholesale importation of western methods in the governance of the country is responsible for the growing expenditure. A gradual reversion in some matters to old indigenous lines would restore the financial prosperity of Bengal.

It is gratifying, though not self-respecting, that the Government of India has in a mood of benevolence mercifully remitted the provincial contribution of 63 lakhs due under the Meston Award. This would temporarily cover the threatened deficit of 23 lakhs, and leave a surplus of 40 lakhs. I congratulate the Hon'ble the Member in charge of Finance on this windfall, and I trust he will now be in sufficiently good humour to attend to any reasonable calls that may be made on his purse. Fortified by this conviction, I now place before him certain constructive suggestions, as to how he may dispose of the surplus, to the satisfaction of the people. I would suggest the allotment of 10 lakhs to free primary education in the villages of Bengal. Sir, whatever tinkering the new constitutional fabric may undergo at the top and on the surface, it will not be steady or stable, unless you take in hand the basis, namely, the masses representing the electorate of Bengal. Mass education, therefore, is of primary importance not only for the stability of the democratic fabric that you are gradually setting up, but is essential for the progressive realisation of true responsible Government. With 90 per cent. of the electorate steeped in ignorance, and prone to become footballs of wily mischief-makers, drastic constitutional changes would spell disaster, and at best would replace the British authority by an Indian oligarchy not responsible to God or man, but to their own sweet antics.

I suggest the allotment of another 10 lakhs to the extension of the water-supply and sanitation to the villages of Bengal. It is unnecessary for me to discuss over again the sufferings of Bengal peasants during the dry season for absence of wholesome drinking water, nor need I refer to the havoc caused by cholera and malaria, owing to such absence.

I would also ask the Hon'ble the Member in charge of Finance to allot another 5 lakhs to the encouragement of secondary and high education amongst the Moslems of Bengal, who are comparatively poor, by support of more hostels and by giving more scholarships to deserving poor Muhammadan students. I press for the encouragement of Muhammadan education, not from any communal feeling, but from the higher standard of true nationalism. The Hindus and Muhammadans have lived together for over eight centuries in this country, and if it pleases Providence will so live together for generations to come and jointly and devotedly serve their common dear motherland. Therefore, the country as a whole cannot progress towards the realisation of Swaraj, unless these two great communities are gradually brought up educationally and economically to the same level. They are the two great component elements in the Indian population, and one element cannot remain long healthy, if the other is unhealthy or decadent. Therefore, I appeal confidently to my hon'ble friends in the Swaraj party in the Council to support these suggestions. And with equal confidence I appeal to the European element in the Council to support it because it is no less to their interest, as they have invested capital in the country, that the whole State should be healthy and progressive. The whole State cannot be healthy, if 55 per cent. of it are decadent and unprogressive, owing to the absence of the healthy and invigorating breeze and light of education.

The remaining 15 lakhs of the surplus I would suggest may be spent by Government on other mature and sound schemes connected with nation-building departments.

Sir, if the Hon'ble the Member in charge of Finance accepts my humble suggestions, he will not only remove the charge of irresponsiveness so vehemently pressed the other day by my hon'ble friend, Sir Provash Chunder Mitter, but will at one stroke convert the Budget, which has been characterised by several hon'ble members as a Budget framed in the interest of classes and capitalists, into a real people's Budget.

Lastly, I would express my thanks to the Hon'ble the Member in charge of Finance for alloting 3 lakhs for the Islamia College in Calcutta which has been a dream of my youth, and in the formulation of which idea in course of a pamphlet on Muhammadan education in Bengal, I had some hand some 40 years ago, in association with the late Nawab Bahadur Syed Amir Hossain, the then Secretary of the

Central National Muhammadan Association. Moslems' thanks are also due to His Excellency the Governor who laid its foundation-stone the other day. May the college be soon in working order, to the cultural progress of the Moslems and to the general benefit of the State.

Maulvi SAIYED ABDUR ROB CHAUDHURI addressed the Council in Bengal.

Babu MANMATHA NATH ROY: At the fag end of this Budget discussion, namely, on the fourth day, I have no mind to go into details, but I shall draw attention to some of the striking features in the present Budget. The Hon'ble the Finance Member has told us that there is a policy in the Budget for 1925-26. It seems to me that there is one policy and one policy alone, which pervades the whole Budget. It is the sacrifice of the masses for the classes, it is the catering for the amenities of the favoured few and the cold shade of neglect for the distressed millions. The Hon'ble the Finance Member in his statement has drawn attention to the anxious interest which the Government has shown in the transferred departments, and as conclusive evidence has referred to an item of 1¼ lakhs for the creation of the public health organisations. This amount is admittedly small, but I do not refer to that circumstance now. What I refer to is that it is a pure jugglery and that it is no new expenditure at all. If you refer to pages 54 and 55 of the Budget, you will find that the grant for anti-malarial measures has been reduced from Rs. 1 lakh to Rs. 50,000, the grant for anti-kala-azar operations from Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 25,000, the grant for anti-smallpox measures has been reduced from Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 25,000; so that this is no new expenditure at all. It is an instance of what they say *suggestio falsi* and *suppressio veri*, and although I cannot compliment the Hon'ble the Finance Member on the credit that he claims, I cannot help complimenting him on his clever conjury.

You have asked for police buildings, quarters for married constables, nurses' quarters, quarters for the Entally Orphanage, and many other offices or new buildings for officers. In most of these cases, you say that the present buildings are unsuitable. The Hon'ble Sir Hugh Stephenson has told us and we agree with him that rented buildings involve some amount of discomfort and inconvenience. If the Government or the Council had Aladdin and his wonderful lamp, no doubt we would have provided these beautiful and splendid structures, but our resources are limited, and we have to choose. Have the Government any idea as to the magnitude of the misery, the sufferings and the distress of the millions in the rural areas? To them it is not a question of inconvenience or discomfort, but to them it is a question of life and death. Have the Government any idea as to the magnitude of the havoc that is caused by malaria and kala-azar,

the illiteracy prevailing in the mufassal and the want of drinking water? Can this misery, this havoc be in any way compared to the discomfort and inconvenience that is attached to the occupation of rented buildings? You want to tar-macadamise the roads of Calcutta, but have the Government any idea that in the rural area most of the roads are impassable during the major portion of the year? The framers of the Budget may know of the conditions in Calcutta and the towns, but I ask them: Have they any idea of the conditions in the rural areas? Have they any information about this? If they have none, we have clearly told them what it is, and I put it to them—which would they choose—the items that you have proposed, or the items we have suggested? Which in any responsible or civilised Government ought to have preference? You say that the increased expenditure that you have proposed is of a non-recurring nature and may be met out of the surplus of previous years, but have you considered what amount of non-recurring expenditure is needed for a fairly adequate number of schools and dispensaries, tube-wells and tanks in the rural areas? Four thousand unions are without schools, and if you have to provide each union with at least one school, that will require a non-recurring expenditure of 40 lakhs. The majority of the unions are without dispensaries and even half a crore may not be adequate for a fair number of dispensaries. The provision of 2½ lakhs for water-supply is hopelessly inadequate. I represent a rural constituency, and I know how keenly the absence of drinking water, the barest necessity of life, is felt in my district. The province requires 20 times 2½ lakhs if any relief has to be afforded in this respect. You thus require a non-recurring expenditure of 1½ crores for primary education, sanitation and water-supply and are not these needs urgent and immediate? Would you be justified in diverting a substantial portion of the surplus for purposes of luxury and certainly of less importance? There are also many other important irrigation measures which you have not been able to take up for want of money. In this agricultural province, this is a question of life and death to many, and should this not be given preference? Then, again you say that the problem of agricultural education is receiving the attention of Government, but when is this long-felt want to be removed? You have asked for 3 lakhs in view of the abnormal political situation But is the employment of the extra Criminal Investigation Departmen a remedy for the evil?

It appears that in the Education Budget you have asked for th inspectors about the same figure as that for the current year. Thi demand was refused last year but restored later on by the Council. Th work that is done by these men is largely of a statistical nature, bu their services may be better utilised if they are attached to primar or high schools or groups of them for purposes of teaching an management. Many of the schools cannot employ men of such stati

or qualification, and the improvement that is suggested may add considerably to the efficiency and strength of the schools, which cannot be expected to result from work of a statistical nature.

A tentative grant of Rs. 2 lakhs has been made in respect of the Calcutta University. More, however, will be needed if the University has to be placed on a solid basis. I may refer to one or two matters on the revenue side. The police revenue has been reduced by the amount of contribution which the East Indian Railway Company used to pay to Government till the Railway came under State management. This amount should now be levied from the Government of India, if the Railway require the same services now, or the strength of the Railway Police should be reduced. It is unfortunate that the jute mill in the Presidency Jail was closed down in December, 1924, and that this resulted in a loss of revenue, but we have not heard the reasons why that had to be done.

A charge is often brought against us, the members of the Swaraj party, that we are bent upon a wholesale rejection of the Budget. We are not to blame for this, it is the treasury Benches who, by their example, have led the way. I must frankly express my conviction that the suggestions or criticisms of many of the non-official members of the Council are received with indifference or scant courtesy and our attitude is largely the result of over—anxiety on the part of the Government for a wholesale acceptance of the Budget. The Government may be the repository of wisdom. If that be so, our presence here is of little use. We had another example, when His Excellency the Governor, after the Budget voting last year, restored the whole of the demands with the exception of that for irrigation. I do not know why distinction was made in the case of irrigation demands; it may be that from the point of view of agriculture in this province the necessity of irrigation is obvious. Another example has also been recently set. Notwithstanding the unanimous verdict of the country the recommendations of the Lee Commission have been accepted the consequent increase of salary is very substantially responsible for the present deficit.

The framers of the Budget must not act in a spirit of detachment from the people and their real needs and demands. Their duty is not to find how to cater for the favoured few and their luxuries and amenities, but to acquaint themselves with the sufferings or the misery of the neglected and distressed millions. You may appoint Ministers or you may find men who are eager for the *Delhi ka laddu*. For the information of my European friends I may explain what this expression means. In our vernacular it has an interesting suggestion, *viz.*, it is disliked by those who get it, but it is anxiously coveted by those who have not got it. But unless you change your point of view, the Reforms will be an absolute failure.

With the deficit of 33 lakhs staring you in the face, the people in the firm grip of malaria, kala-azar and many other ills that are causing havoc in the country, the extent of illiteracy prevailing in the mufassal, the people in the rural areas crying for the barest necessity of drinking water, give up your present policy of exhausting the surplus of the past years or the people will be justified in exclaiming "Nero is fiddling."

Babu NALINIRANJAN SARKER: Sir, the Swarajists have been ridiculed for steadily maintaining that the Reforms are a sham and a mockery and hence unworkable; but we find that we are having more and more converts to our views and I hope you will pardon me if I take this opportunity to congratulate the Hon'ble Mr. Donald on his candid confessions that "we cannot go on marking time and allowing the proceeds of our new taxation to be swallowed up merely in maintaining the normal wants of the administration without making any progress or development" and that under the present conditions of the finance arising out of the working of the Reforms there can be "no hope of progress or development for some time to come." It has always been obvious to us that no real improvement in the situation can be expected when the Central Government swallows up about 21 crores or 70 per cent. of the revenues raised in this province and of the remaining 30 per cent. only a few crumbs are left over to meet the crying needs of the people, and that, too, after pandering to the preferential demands under the *lee-loot bundbast* entailing an annual increase of about 7 lakhs in the expenditure and for similar other items for keeping up the grandeur of the administration.

The present Budget cannot be called a people's Budget for all the prominence it gives to the protection of the lives of the people by setting up a pampered system of law and order, in face of the tragic fact that the people have really no lives or property worth the name. The reckless exploitation that has been the one feature of the administrative policy of our benevolent rulers, has made the people so many living skeletons drained dry of their vital resources.

Sir, I hope you will pardon me if even at the risk of tiring your patience I proceed to describe in a little more detail the condition of the people of our province if only to show that in making this last general remark, I have been guilty of no exaggeration.

The general death-rate in Bengal according to official statistics is still more than 30 per thousand of the population, as contrasted with the death-rate of England which is 11·4 in the year 1923. The rate of infant mortality in Bengal in 1922 was 188 per thousand births, whereas in England it has been reduced to the minimum of 59 in the year 1923. The people of this province are being carried off by various

diseases (most of which could have been prevented but for the callous indifference of our rulers) at the rate of more than 14 lakhs a year or a little below four thousand souls per day.

There is no adequate provision for treatment or diagnosis or for measures of prevention such as the opening of "isolation wards" for "contacts," for the free supply of disinfectants, the organisation of quarantine, effective control over food-supply during epidemics. Even in our urban areas there are no such institutions as baby and maternity clinics or the like. As for the dispensation of medical relief in rural areas, a single charitable dispensary is intended to serve about eighty thousand souls or 139 square miles with very poor facilities for communication.

As for the education of the people, the percentage of literacy in Bengal is 10 as against 95 in Japan, 94 in the United Kingdom and 90 in the United States of America. The average sum spent for each 100 of the population for education is Rs. 28 in Bengal, whereas it is Rs. 260 in Japan, Rs. 630 in Great Britain, Rs. 1,670 in Canada and Rs. 2,700 in the United States. The average area served by a school in Bengal is 2·2 square miles, whereas it is ·25 or a quarter square mile in Japan. Out of a total male population of school-going age numbering over 65 lakhs a little over 11 lakhs or 17 per cent. attend primary schools in Bengal.

Finally, what do we find with regard to the economic and material conditions of the people. Their condition was aptly described by the late Mr. G. Subramania Iyer: They are "living a life of chronic starvation and of the most abject ignorance, grim and silent in their suffering, without zest in life, without comfort or enjoyment, without hope or ambition, living because they were born into the world, and dying because life could no longer be kept in the body." The average Bengali is unable to clothe his whole body, but can at best barely manage to cover his nudity; and for this reason Mahatma Gandhi has taken to wearing the loin cloth as an embodiment of the dire distress of our people.

He lives in hovels, impervious to light and air, with no protection against cold or storm. He sleeps huddled up on a bamboo mat wrapped in his only *kantha* (rags sewn together to form a quilt), exposed to the inclemency of the seasons, always the first victim of diseases like influenza as was admitted by the late Mr. E. S. Montague.

To what are we to attribute this miserable condition of our teeming millions? Nearly 70 per cent. of our rural population subsist on agriculture and each has to maintain on an average 2·5 dependents, besides himself, with the scanty yield of 2¼ acres on an average, whereas the average allotment of a peasant in England is 21 acres of land, *i.e.*,

the [illegible] expend out of agriculture open to an English peasant is [illegible] times as much as that of his confrere in Bengal.

On the authority of Sir M. Visvesvaraya, President of the Economic Enquiry Committee, the average annual income per capita of an Indian is Rs. 58 as contrasted with Rs. 720 and Rs. 550 of the people of the United Kingdom and Canada, respectively. Out of this scanty income he is burdened with taxation to the extent of 13·5 per cent. which leaves him a balance of less than Rs. 4 per month to make both ends meet. This, in brief, is the condition which our province has reached under the paternal and efficient care of our beneficent trustees. What have they ever done to prevent this exploitation and its dire results by educating the villager more efficiently to use his hands, his brains and his resources?

Now let us see what our self-imposed trustees have provided for in the present Budget to make up for their past supineness. The only items deserving of mention in this connection are a provision of Rs. 2,60,000 for rural water-supply, of Rs. 1,25,000 for public health organisation and of Rs. 1,00,000 for extension of primary education. The allotments in respect of anti-malarial and anti-kala-azar survey have been reduced to half of what was provided last year, while the provision for anti-cholera measures has been altogether withheld. The ground for such reduction or absence of provision for public health purposes has been put down to the absence of suitable schemes, and so over eighty thousand souls are to continue to die of cholera pending the framing of such schemes. The solution of the perennial problem of water scarcity lies, according to the Hon'ble the Finance Member, in the rapid expansion of union boards, that is in the increase of taxation, and, as regards anti-malarial measures for prevention of death of about 10 lakhs a year, in the formation of anti-malarial co-operative societies on the basis of Rai Bahadur Chatterjee's Society. As for education a sum of Rs. 1,00,000 is provided for extension of primary education—for 100 additional schools in the province. At this rate it will take 30 years to obtain even one primary school in every panchayet union. Can we wait 30 years; will a dying people survive that period?

The usual advice administered to us in answer to appeals for financial help for development schemes for the benefit of the people is: "Organise, organise, organise your own efforts." Quite so, but does not the possibility of such organisation depend largely upon the political condition? In democratic countries like England or America, most [illegible] owe their origin to popular initiative, no doubt. But in these countries the Government never grudges help to such public [illegible], because the Government for the time being owes its existence to the support of the people. In India, where the people's

support counts for nothing, the work of organisation for any public purposes which offers no attraction to the bureaucracy is not only difficult but often made impossible, by simply flaunting the red signal of the terrorist danger.

Under the present atmosphere, born of natural distrust and want of confidence in the Executive, healthy popular organisations cannot grow. If the Government are really serious about the growth of such organisation, why not give proof of their sincerity by giving larger power with genuine responsibility to local bodies in regard to their own requirements including the policing of their own localities?

I realise fully that under the prevailing system of administration it is not at all possible to provide from the current revenues the huge sum which alone would be sufficient to give an effective start for any real scheme of national development. Tax the people further, you cannot; they are already taxed to the point of death. That is why I and my party feel that the only possible course is to immediately replace dyarchy by granting full provincial autonomy, thereby giving the people full control over the whole policy of Government and enabling them to devote an adequate amount to their own national development by retrenching and readjusting and thus setting free monies otherwise locked up, instead of having to think of further taxation as the only possible remedy. But the bureaucracy is too wary to relax the tight grip of its steel-frame, and fain would continue to reserve to itself the responsibility of working out the salvation of the people in "slow process" as Mr. Donald has put it. But as I have pointed out our fast shortening term of life calls insistently for a more accelerated pace. The driblets allotted here and there as contemplated by the "slow process" method are only useful for making a delusive show and can produce no real effect on the general condition of the country.

What then have I to advocate by way of a constructive policy under circumstances as they now are? My suggestion is that if the Government is really serious in its professions, it should immediately adopt a loan policy and raise a loan of, say, 5 crores in the course of a period not exceeding 5 years for the purposes of primary and technical education, sanitation and public health, agriculture and industry. The proceeds of such loan should be administered by a Trust or Trusts comprised of specially elected representatives of the people, with their powers and functions defined by special Statute. For the recoupment of such loan on a 30 years' basis and at 6 per cent. interest, an annual provision of 36½ lakhs would be necessary to meet the interest and sinking fund charges. The Government annually spends towards different development schemes from Rs. 6 to Rs. 7 lakhs in driblets. So the problem, in my view, is reduced to the finding out of less than Rs. 30 lakhs a year, which, if, as I postulate, the Government is in earnest, there should be no real difficulty in finding, having regard to

the fact that the amount required means retrenchment of less than 3 per cent. out of an annual expenditure of 11 crores, in face of the huge amount recommended by the Rajendra Committee. Further amounts may also be made free by readjustments showing a greater regard for the proportion between expenses of a more urgent and those of a less urgent nature.

The loan policy should not be ruled out with the preliminary objection that some of the matters, referred to above, education, for instance, are not productive public works. Japan has recently floated loans for education, the County Councils of England have followed the same policy. Why? Because in a larger view education is not only productive, but creates the only true basis of all production. Of course, it also tends to limit exploitation—but that, Sir, is not the excuse put forward. Besides, where their own national need was direly felt the Government did not hesitate to incur an unproductive war debt of 133 crores, as a burden on the Indian revenues. May we not be pardoned if we feel as direly the need of saving our people who are dying faster than did the soldiery of England at the cannon's mouth? I may further assure you, Sir, that the loan I propose will ultimately be more profitable to Government than any number of Grand Trunk Canal Schemes by increasing the taxable capacity of the people and diminishing expenditure in maintaining law and order by bringing the people to a more vital sense of their true interests and thus making them more law-abiding. There is another objection usually put forward that the question of such loans can only be considered after a definite scheme has been submitted. To this my reply is that the policy of loan must first be accepted and the appointment and functions of the Trustees determined. Then the Trustees will be able to deal with the framing of suitable schemes. This is the procedure which has been followed in the case of the Port Trust, the Improvement Trust, etc.

There is yet another argument that can be put forth against it that it will not be possible to raise such a large loan. My idea of the credit of the Government provided always, it is really in earnest, is not so low, and I venture, to assert that in view of the purposes for which the loan is suggested the country will respond to it as it has never done before.

If the Hon'ble the Finance Member will favour me by stating any further difficulties that he may anticipate in the way of floating such a loan, I am confident that I shall be able to suggest ways out of them, provided, of course, he is amenable to reasonable non-official reasoning.

If my suggestion of a loan policy is not accepted, may I ask the Government to come forward with any other scheme to solve the difficulties I have indicated, say, within the next 5 or 6 years, which is all the time that the circumstances seem to permit of.

Let me warn the Government in all seriousness that they should not miss this opportunity for showing their earnestness while there is yet time for at least partially restoring the confidence of the people, shaken, as it stands, now after a bitter trial of unrealised hopes and hollow promises.

[At this stage the Council was adjourned for 10 minutes.]

After the adjournment.

Mr. E. VILLIERS: Ever since I first had the honour of becoming a member of this august assemblage, it has been a matter of wonder to me why these three or four days are set aside annually for this general discussion on the Budget; that I have not been alone in so wondering is vouched for by the fact that many of my friends, both European and Indian, have raised the same query.

In the hopes, therefore, of finding a solution to the riddle I determined to be an assiduous attendant during this year's debate lest haply that which was hidden from so many of my friends might in the fulness of time be made clear to me; and I think I have found the answer to the riddle—and as is so often the case, the answer is a surprisingly simple one; it is this; that the allocation of this time is a precautionary measure taken by a paternal Government against the spontaneous gases which seem to generate wherever in this country a few men gather together—it is a measure of relief against what I would term mental flatulence; and as is always the case where men talk largely for the sake of talking, time-honoured shibboleths and well-hacknied catch phrases are indulged in—phrases used from infection rather than from conviction—and one of the worst offenders in this respect is my friend Babu Manmatha Nath Roy, who has just been indulging himself to the full—all our old friends have been trotted out by him. "The neglected and distressed millions," "the sacrifice of the masses to the classes"—I believe he did not produce our old friend "the change of heart"—why, I don't know—however, in order that I may not be suspected of suffering from this "mental flatulence" I will deal with the point at issue—the Budget.

There are two matters in particular to which I would invite the attention of the House—the first of which comes under the heading of Jails.

I am distressed at seeing the smallness of the amount allotted to Juvenile Jails: while visiting one of the jails of which I am a visitor I noticed again what I have noticed before—the boys and the very decent types of boys who are sent to prison for faults which should never be the cause of their seeing the inside of a criminal jail—faults which in England would be corrected by a good sound whipping with the birch; I realise the difficulties of coping with the situation in a

country where there exists the inordinate and foolish prejudice against corporal punishment—a country which would sooner risk its youth becoming confirmed criminals than follow the advice of Solomon—and the only way in which this situation can be met is by enlarging the scope of the Juvenile jails—I trust the Finance Member will bear this in mind and try and arrange his finance in such a manner as will admit of the juvenile jails being enlarged.

The second point I would deal with is the question of the Inspectors of Co-operative Societies; and I intend subsequently moving a reduction of Re. 1 as a protest against the scandalous treatment which these people have received. There are some 64 of these inspectors, each doing sterling work for their country, who have been serving without a rise in pay for over 20 years—who have been subsisting on the miserable pittance of Rs. 105 per mensem without receiving any rise whatsoever—in spite of the tremendous rise in the cost of living; now, Sir, I realise that this is an apathetic country which is hard to move—for a country and an assembly which will sit down under the insult offered to it by Sir Basil Blackett the other day without a word of protest, will take a lot of moving—I refer, of course, to Sir Basil Blackett's speech when he told Indians in so many words that on their merits they could not stand up against the Europeans—but needed the scales weighed in their favour—it is difficult to conceive of anything more wantonly insulting than this and, as I say, the apathy of a country which will sit down under such an insult without uttering a word of protest, must be pretty hard to move none the less, I do sincerely trust that when the time comes this House will give me its support in furthering the interests of these few countrymen of theirs.

Other than this, I think on the whole the Hon'ble the Finance Member is to be congratulated on his Budget considering the difficulties which he has been up against.

Babu MANMOHAN NEOGI: I put it for serious consideration of the Government whether this annual ceremony of holding a general discussion of the Budget should not be abolished and Rules of Business changed to serve that purpose. Sir, there might have some justification for this procedure in pre-Reform days when there was no occasion of demands for grants being made, but as under the present Constitution we can raise the very same debates at the time when demands for grants are made by proposing suitable amendments to the demands for grants, there seems to be no justification now for allotting time for general discussion which seems to serve no other purpose than to stimulate for the time being a spasmodic attempt for research work in statistics.

In examining the general features of the Budget that has been presented by the Hon'ble the Finance Member what strikes most is the visible attempt that is being made to totally disregard the

recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee made two years ago. Instead of there being a sincere attempt to give effect to those recommendations, various interpretations are being put on the same to nullify the effects of the same. Thus, we find the Hon'ble Sir Hugh Stephenson telling us that the effects of retrenchment was only to put the brake on the expansion of expenditure and to cut off excrescences. Now, Sir, excrescences are not only not cut off but on the contrary new excrescences are being set up on existing excrescences. Take, for instance, the "22—General Administration"—three most notable cuts recommended by the committee are the total abolition of the Body Guard of His Excellency (making a saving of Rs. 1,20,000) and abolition of the 5 Divisional Commissioners (making a saving Rs. 5,20,000) and the abolition of the 2 Members of the Executive Council out of four and one Minister out of 3 (making a salary of Rs. 2,16,000). Now what is the Government going to do to carry out these recommendations? They are not going to abolish the Body Guard or the Commissioners or any Member or Members, but to our utter astonishment we find that the Hon'ble the Finance Member has, while explaining the increase of 6¼ lakhs in General Administration over the revised estimate of the current year, mildly hinted that the provision for Minister's salary made on past practice is liable to change should there be any alteration in the number of Ministers. This, Sir, we take to be a direct hint that 4 Ministers may be ultimately made 2 Hindus and 2 Muhammadans. Thus, a structure consisting of strong and stable (not ministry) but Ministers may be completed. Before last August we heard that out of those who will vote for Minister's salary, one will be appointed a third Minister—but, unfortunately, that did not catch. This time we are hearing that 4 Ministers will be appointed. This time some portion of the bait has been swallowed—demoralisation has already commenced and we see the spectacle of some of us with testimonials from various quarters are applying for the post.

Then I would respectfully draw the attention of the hon'ble members of this House to the estimate on police. The Retrenchment Committee recommended an amount of Rs. 6,12,000 in the Criminal Investigation Department, the Intelligence Branch of the Bengal Police, and about Rs. 35,000 in the Special Branch of the Calcutta Police, but instead of there being these necessary cuts, provision has been made for an increase of 3 lakhs in this branch over the revised Budget of the current year. The Hon'ble Sir Hugh Stephenson has told the Council that this increase is due to the present abnormal political situation. The Hon'ble the Finance Member has informed us that this increase is chiefly due to the increased expenditure required for the additional temporary establishment which it has been found necessary to entertain to deal with the great increase in work that has resulted from the activities of the revolutionary party.

After the very startling revelations made by two internees, viz., by Babu Jibanlal Banerjee and Babu Bhupendra Nath Dutt, in their memorial to the Secretary of State made in July last year and pointedly referred to by Pandit Motilal Nehru in the Legislative Assembly about two months ago and having reference to a further statement submitted by one of them to the members of the Legislative Assembly we have very little doubt, Sir, that this secret money goes a great way to help the revolutionary movement than to suppress its activities. These statements and memorial had been before the Government for a pretty long time and instead of their being any serious attempt to make a sifting inquiry into these very serious allegations against the activities of the secret police, we are now going to be asked to make a contribution of 3 lakhs for their maintenance. The sooner the recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee about these departments are carried out the better for the country.

If we carefully consider the whole Budget we deduce only one inference and that is that a complete go-by has been given to the Retrenchment Committee's report.

Sir, while the Budget of the next year is a deficit Budget we are asked to sanction a loan of Rs. 8,50,000 not for any so-called nation-building departments but for better housing of the Calcutta Police.

In the transferred departments we find that a provision of Rs. 2,50,000 has been made for water-supply in rural areas but curiously it appears that Budget estimate of the current year for public health has been cut short by Rs. 2,30,000. This to us seems to be only a jugglery in figures.

Sir, people cry for more education, more sanitation and more industry, but they cry in vain. It is the reserved departments, specially the police and services, who eat up all available money, and only a few crumbs are thrown to the transferred departments. That has been the systematic policy before the Reforms and that is the policy doggedly followed even now. Who will after this dare say that there is no policy behind this Budget?

Maulvi ASIMUDDIN AHAMAD addressed the Council in Bengali. The translation of his speech is as follows:—

Many things have been said about this budget for the last three or four days. This year's budget has been characterised by some as a trick of magic, by others as a mere paper scheme and by others again as a child's toy and with similar other epithets. Many of my learned friends have raised many objections against this budget head by head, item by item, but I do not know whether any amendment would be possible by that. But the saying is, that truth must be told whether it is listened to or not and so I shall insist on saying what is true.

The four departments, namely, Administration, Administration of Justice, Jails and Police Government spend the total amount of 3 crores and 70 lakhs of rupees. If Government had spent half the amount to remove the poverty of the people and to solve unemployment problem, there would have been no necessity for the trial and punishment of thieves and dacoits and of the oppositionists and for such elaborate arrangement for jails and the police. When men cannot find food for their wives, sons and daughters, they lose all sense of right and wrong and good and bad, and try to get food for their families by thefts and dacoities and if necessary even by murder. Men prefer to put a stop to the miseries and sufferings of life by welcoming the jail and the gallows to death by starvation. I venture to say that, Government have got to spend crores of rupees on jail, the administration of justice, etc., merely on account of this poverty of the people.

Administration of justice in the existing criminal and civil courts has become so expensive that no poor aggrieved person can come to these courts and get any benefit therefrom. I do not know, therefore, why an excessive high sum of money is spent on the Department of Administration of Justice merely to maintain a number of officers.

It is superfluous to say anything about the expenditure on the Police Department. I said last year and I repeat it this year that Government have become so very unpopular with the people merely on account of the oppression by the police.

The condition of the cultivators in the villages has become so deplorable that nearly ninety-five per cent. of the rural people possess no lands and nearly ninety-nine per cent. are in debts. The raiyat community in the country is about to be completely destroyed on account of the exorbitant enhancement of rent, the interests they have to pay for arrears of rent and default to pay a *kist*, the *abwabs* and law-suits. In each village there are not even two or three persons who are free from debts. Almost all the lands possessed by the raiyats are coming some way or other into the hands of the money-lenders and the landowners. Many peasants are unable to grow crops in season for want of money. The condition of the raiyats in Tippera is so deplorable that the land of nearly every peasant is mortgaged to the money-lenders. If the co-operative system could be introduced in every village with the help of the union boards, it would have helped the peasants in getting loans on small interest, but in the budget for the current year Government provided only five lakhs of rupees for this department. Even this small amount would be spent to pay the salaries of the officers and to meet the establishment charges.

Though agriculture is the chief means of livelihood in Bengal, the Finance Member has allotted only 11 lakhs and 75,000 rupees to the

Department of Agriculture, and not even a single pice of this sum will reach the peasants.

The unemployment problem has assumed such proportions in the villages that 25 or 30 per cent. of the people can find no work to earn their livelihood. Unless steps are taken to give them training in some industry they will surely die of starvation. There is no arrangement for industrial training in the villages. Seven lakhs and 85,000 rupees only have been allotted to the Department of Industry, but the villages will not receive even a pice worth of benefit from this sum.

The prevalence of malaria and kala-azar in the villages is due simply to want of food and of sleep, excessive labour and unwholesome food and similar other causes. I believe, if the people could have got proper food to eat they would have never died like this. When food is wanting what will doctors and injections do?

The village union boards have been formed uselessly. They have been given neither sufficient money nor sufficient power to be able to do any service to the country.

What can be more regrettable than this that while the people of the country have got no road to walk on foot, lakhs of rupees are to be spent on the repairs of the roads in Calcutta where there are various conveyances, such as trams, motor-cars, carriages, bicycles, etc?

A point to be specially noticed in this budget is that while the grants for the judicial, the police and other departments run to lakhs, etc., those for the departments of agriculture, industry, education, sanitation, etc., run to thousands or hundreds.

Not a single pice has been provided this year for the teachers of private lower primary schools. But, in truth, these private schools were serviceable to the rural raiyat community.

One is liable to incur the displeasure of many persons when one proceeds to speak of the wants and grievances of the illiterate, poor raiyats or cultivators of the villages. I believe that nearly seventy-five members of this House have been returned by the raiyats but very many among them forget these unfortunate raiyats or cultivators when they come to Calcutta or enter this Council Chamber. My friend the Kumar Sahib was very much displeased and said many things when the other day a nominated member spoke something on behalf of the raiyats. Again, on Shah Saheb and my friend Maulvi Aftab Hossain Joarder having said something about the interests of the zamindars, the *Dainik Basumati* was offended and published long protests against their speeches. The Hon'ble Sir Hugh Stephenson will flame up with anger if anything is said against the police in connection with the interests or the wants and grievances of the tenants in the villages, while the zamindars will be displeased if anything is said against their interests. Where will the helpless raiyats find redress or shelter?

Mr. PRESIDENT: Maulvi Saheb, your time is up. Please take your seat now.

Maulvi ASIMUDDIN AHAMAD: Sir, I shall finish at once. I have carefully studied this budget, but I regret that for the reasons mentioned above and for other reasons I am unable to congratulate the Hon'ble Mr. Donald, who has introduced this budget.

Dr. KUMUD SANKAR RAY: I really had no intention of taking any part in the general discussions on the Budget, but I find (I have calculated roughly and quote the figures subject to correction) that out of an average number of 140 members of this Council, about 100 members attend during the general discussion of the Budget every session. If we calculate the daily allowance for each member at Rs. 10 in addition to the travelling allowances drawn by each of them, the total expenditure comes to Rs. 5,000 every session, during the general discussion of the Budget. During the four years at this rate we have spent about Rs. 20,000 on daily allowances apart from the travelling allowances which would probably come to a much higher figure. I have sent notice of a question regarding this matter and I am waiting for a reply, so that in the meantime, these figures may be taken for what they are worth. I want to know what is the good of spending this Rs. 5,000 of public money every year in an useless discussion of the Budget. I had not the honour of being a member of the last Council, but so far as I remember none of the suggestions that were made during the general discussion last year has been accepted, nor, as a result of the discussion, were any changes made in individual items of demands for grants, so that it seems to me that the Members in charge of the different departments did not take into consideration the views of the non-official members, nor were they usually present in their seats while the discussion was going on. I again ask: What is the use of wasting Rs. 5,000 of public money in a useless discussion of the Budget?

After having made this preliminary observation I should like to take a little time of the Council regarding one or two other items of the Budget. As a medical man I find, with great pain, that even this year Government have not seen their way to making a change regarding the levy of 8 annas on every in-door patient. They levied one anna on every out-door patient in all Government-aided institutions but subsequently they have seen their way to withdraw it. But the levy on indoor patients still goes on. So I would suggest to the Government Member to see his way to take away this charge also.

We were all told when the additional taxes, for instance, the Stamp Tax, the Amusements Tax and other taxes were levied, that the surplus that would accrue from them, after meeting the deficit in the Budget of 1921-22 would be spent on the nation-building departments but up till now nothing has been done. Even the small amount that might

have been allotted for the nation-building departments would hardly meet the requirements. The Hon'ble Mr. Donald has said that he had a scheme from Mr. Das but as the scheme was not complete he could only allot a paltry sum of money for that scheme which could be spent during the year. But he rejected the proposal of a loan policy enunciated by Mr. Das and also elaborated in detail by Babu Naliniranjan Sarker to-day. I do not know why the Government charge the members of the Council or anybody else for not having any scheme ready. Is it the duty of the members of this Council or is it the duty of the Government to ask the different departments which they control, to frame schemes and put them before the Council for discussion? If it is the duty of the Government to do so, are they not failing in their duty—this is a question that I want to ask the Hon'ble the Finance Member. He has remarked that no loan can be raised unless a scheme is ready. Sir, it is not the fault of the members of this Council or Mr. Das that a scheme is not ready. The Finance Member could have consulted his Director of Public Health, and Dr. Bentley could have got ready a number of schemes by this time which might have been laid before the Council for discussion. So it is not the fault of any individual member of this Council; the fault lies entirely with the Government. It seems to me, Sir, that they are tinkering with the nation-building departments simply because they do not want to do anything in this matter. They do not want the welfare of the people. For instance, we find that they are only trying to tackle a few of the problems such as malaria and kala-azar. But tuberculosis has not been dealt with. We know how it is spreading in the country. Those who care to read statistics will find twelve persons die of tuberculosis every hour in Bengal. But from the attitude of the Government and their policy as enunciated in the Budget I see no hope for the future.

Maulvi SAYEDUL HOQUE: When discussing the various items of the Budget the prevailing idea or disappointing idea that pervades its—it is nothing but like a literary discussion in a club house—having no binding force on the hands and minds of those who are in a position of framing the Budget. We are eagerly waiting for those days when our suggestions and recommendations will not be like crying in the wilderness.

When this Council Chamber is like a pay house and we are so many actors—we have to play our part—while we occupy any place here.

My first point is to find out what is the policy behind the Budget—the policy that makes itself evident is to swell the pay and allowances of those who are so firmly holding the steel-frame of administration—and to cope with this expenditure by direct or indirect taxation. I refer to the decision of the Lee Commission. Last year I gave notice to move

a resolution in this Council recommending the pay of officers holding Provincial and Subordinate Services to be fixed at pre-war scale, but the result I find is contrary. While the increased revenue from the excise and stamps departments are to meet this enhanced expenditure we hear of retrenchment. I take the case of the Agriculture Department—The condition of the higher and gazetted officers remains the same, while the services of some demonstrators and the like who were in close touch with the cultivators, were not required. The posts of 5 Divisional Commissioners can be abolished without loss to efficient administration. Are not these maintained at the cost of the over-taxed public? We want a clear statement of the policy of the Government behind the Budget.

New taxes were levied in 1922-23 and every year indirect revenue has been increasing from excise and stamps, etc., but the proportionate increase in the expenditure for the nation-building departments is not kept up. We cannot trace marked steps taken by the Government to check any further increase of revenue from the excise and stamps departments. If this state of things is allowed to continue, one is driven to the conclusion that the Government is exploiting vice of drink, drugs and litigation to secure revenue.

In the general administration we find an increase of 6 lakhs in the Budget estimate of 1925-26 from the revised estimate this year, while the Public Health Department of the Budget estimate shows a decrease of 2½ lakhs from this year's estimate. The people are suffering from kala-azar, malaria and a thousand other diseases. The life and death question of the people is intermingled with the question of education, industry, etc. Administration is required for safeguarding life and property. Life first, administration second. We are going to spend Rs. 2,87,000 for paving roads on the maidan with tar-macadam, while we are dying in thousands simply for pure drinking water.

Ministers are taken to be capable for imparting education to Indian boys but incapable for the European and Anglo-Indian ones. If there be any reservation at all, that reservation can be made for the backward sections.

Education ought to be made universal and very cheap if not free. Hitherto, we are spending the greatest portions of the education fund on buildings, benches, inspectorate, etc., but a very paltry sum for the pay of teachers and helps to the students. I draw the attention of the Government that the way to technical and commercial education is obstructed by many limitations; such a scheme is to be drawn so as to make it common knowledge in any vernacular to be the minimum qualification for qualifying in various arts and sciences. The system of education to be revised and funds to be allotted accordingly. Sufficient fund is to be earmarked for organising and assisting voluntary

associations which will look after the sanitary conditions of villages and give lessons to the villagers in hygiene. Proper care and knowledge can save many from kala-azar, malaria and a thousand other diseases. "Prevention is better than cure" ought to be the principle of a Government as of an individual. The proposed Chittagong Medical School is not receiving due attention from Government.

Technical and industrial schools are to be opened at important centres of every district following the scheme I have referred to above. In the district of Noakhali many weaving schools died out for want of proper help. We have opened dyeing, jute and carpet weaving in the Begumganj Government Weaving School. But it is impossible for us to maintain and conduct it well without due help from the Government provision to be made in the Budget.

We, the members of the Council and the educated men, know that there is an Agricultural Department under the Government, but real cultivators of the land do not know of the activities of this department. This department ought not to be carried on at a cost of 20 lakhs if the cultivators be not benefited by it. My suggestion is to open agricultural classes with every school whether primary or secondary, because boys that leave primary and secondary schools adopt cultivation. At every important centre of every district agricultural farms are to be established on a small scale conducted by such officers as were formerly village cultivators. They shall be able to mix freely with the villagers and teach them improved methods of cultivation. Sufficient provision should, therefore, be made in the Budget.

Lastly, it is my opinion that the expenditure on the different heads are not proportionate and it ought to be adjusted. A sum Rs. 83,000 is proposed for Circle Officers. I think this will not further the cause of village self-government because those Circle Officers will be against the growth of free will of the union board members as there they will be as agents of the Government. I think this cause will be furthered if those boards are put under the control of district boards as helps to those union boards. It is told that there is a revolutionary party in Bengal. To meet with this situation some lakhs of rupees are to be spent. It will be difficult for this Council to vote for this expenditure before it is convinced about the existence of this party and particulars about it. This provision goes against the recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee.

With these few words I resume my seat.

MEMBER in charge of FINANCE DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. J. Donald): I feel sure, Sir, that the members of the Council are glad that this discussion on the Budget has come to its last stage, and I do not propose to detain the Council at any length in bringing it to a

close. There has been very little in the discussion which my hon'ble colleagues feel called upon to reply to at the present stage, and they have, therefore, refrained from making any remarks now, leaving any particular subject to be dealt with when the voting for grants comes on. I am grateful to Babu Manmohon Neogi and Dr. Kumud Sankar Ray for giving me a lead on what I was myself going to say about this discussion. This discussion is nowadays almost a superfluity. The Council have the opportunity of discussing the various items in the Budget when the demands for the grants of the various departments are moved—and then particular attention can be devoted to the particular department instead of having, as we do now, a brief general survey or criticism of all the departments in a narrow compass. Questions of a general nature might more aptly and with greater fulness be dealt with in the form of a Resolution. In any case, Sir, I think we might reasonably curtail the period of this discussion in future—the general attitude of members on the present occasion would seem to indicate little objection to a proposal of this kind.

There is not very much I have to say in reply to the criticisms of members. Rai Harendra Chaudhuri is still not satisfied with the form in which the Irrigation Budget is explained. I shall see if we can do anything more to oblige the hon'ble member, but I do not wish to overload the estimates or the financial statement with a mass of details. It may be possible to meet his wishes in a simpler fashion than by incorporating all the details he requires in the papers presented to the Council, but I shall see what can be done.

Then, Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, referred to the difference between two sets of figures on page 65 of the Budget estimates and his inability to understand them. Well, this is the sort of question regarding which I suggested that members should come and see me if they had any difficulty. There are, I am sure, several similar entries of the kind referred to by Dr. Roy which could be easily explained. The entry to which he refers is purely a matter of classification. We make a total allotment for contract contingencies. The two heads are bracketed together in the provision, but the Accountant-General, Bengal, classifies them as between postage and telegraph charges and other charges, and shows them in the actual accounts. This is why Dr. Roy finds a difference between the figures for 1923-24 as actually classified by the Accountant-General, and our figures for 1925-26.

Some members of this Council still do not realise the position of the Finance Department in the administration and have not appreciated the remarks I made last year on this subject. I am still asked to make provision or am held liable for omission. I do not propose to dwell on this subject again but I would remind members that the Finance Member is not himself responsible for all the variations in the Budget. The determination of new expenditure is a matter for Government as a

whole. I should, however, like, members to appreciate the difference between recurring and non-recurring expenditure. One member complained that there was money for certain objects while there was no money for other schemes. The schemes in the Budget to which he referred were all of a non-recurring character, *i.e.*, the expenditure was for specific schemes which, when completed, involved no more expenditure, except, perhaps, maintenance. Those he would have liked to include were schemes of a recurring character, *i.e.*, involving a permanent annual charge on our revenues—a specific sum, perhaps gradually increasing, but to be found every year. We could provide for non-recurring scheme because we had money in our balances, which can only be utilised in schemes of this kind. We could not provide for the schemes of the kind the hon'ble members referred to because our normal Budget was a deficit one. It is because of our financial difficulties that we have had no money for recurring expenditure and hence have had recourse to spending on non-recurring schemes. It is for this reason that we cannot afford the relief to the staff of the Co-operative Department to which Khan Bahadur Maulvi Md. Choinuddin and Mr. Villiers have referred. The position has, of course, improved since the Budget was framed. I shall come to that later.

Reference has been made to the increase of 6 lakhs under head "General Administration." This, as I have already explained, is due to the provision for Ministers amounting to 2 lakhs, the increase under "Legislative Council" with more normal sittings, to the provision for additional Circle officers and the incremental pay of Deputy Magistrates.

The charge that I had expected in regard to our excise policy was actually made in this House. We had it in no uncertain terms from at least two members that we are exploiting the vice of drink, and there has been a certain amount of criticism on the part of Mr. James in regard to opium. I shall leave it to the Minister who will shortly take charge of the Excise Department to deal with that subject in due course.

A good deal of the criticisms made this afternoon, and on the last three days, has been made with reference to health measures, public health organisations, education, including education of the depressed classes, all questions relating to the transferred departments. These are, however, matters which the Ministers who will be appointed in a few days will have to deal with, and it is not for me now to answer the criticisms. The Ministers will, no doubt, explain their policy later on. But I will just refer to the Public Health Budget. I said myself in my Budget speech that I was myself disappointed at the fact that the provision was less than that of the present year. Some would have it that more money should be provided for water-supply and various other schemes. I quite agree that the Budget provision may not be sufficient

to meet all the demands but what I maintain is that the amounts whic had been put in the Budget are such as we consider could be spent i 1925-26. The Ministers will, no doubt, formulate schemes in consulta tion with district boards, and if more money is required I do not thin there will be any difficulty in securing it.

Babu Khagendra Nath Ganguly challenges my statements tha municipalities are not ready with schemes for which provision is made i this Budget, and he has cited the requirement of the Howrah Munici pality, as an instance, for a new engine for their water-works. Th municipality have apparently asked for a loan for this purpose. Well, i this were granted—I have not heard of it—the provision would be in th Loans Budget and not in the Public Health Budget. I do not propos to say anything more regarding the various grants. As to the sugges tions about the utilisation of balances and the remarks which Dr. Roy Babu Naliniranjan Sarker and Dr. Banerjea have made in thi connection, they constitute rather a technical problem. Up to date we have not been in a position to take a loan. I am not quite clear as t what their actual intentions are and I should like to discuss thi question with them quietly. Then we may be able to come to some conclusions.

There are only two other points on which I should like to touch Sir Provash Chunder Mitter made a reference to the Report of the Retrenchment Committee and he quoted the figure of Rs. 11 lakhs as the figure of retrenchment on the reserved side. I suppose that he has taken this figure from the grey book which was issued in August last. It is very difficult to determine with accuracy the correct figure but, at any rate, I can give some figures which modify the figure they have mentioned. In addition to the Rs. 11 lakhs there has been a saving during the current year of Rs. 4 lakhs on travelling allowances and Rs. 5 lakhs on contingencies, so even on these figures, the sums retrenched are twice as much as the figure they mentioned. It seems to me that the Council will hardly have realised that although, as Sir Provash Chunder Mitter was careful to say, the summary he referred to was issued after the voting of the Ministers' salaries, the decisions which were summarised in that book were actually arrived at when Sir Provash was himself a Member of the Government he attacks. The various recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee were discussed in joint meetings of the Members of the Executive Council and Ministers sitting together. I cannot, of course, divulge what happened at these meetings when the various recomm[illegible] were discussed. Owing to the procedure the Retrenchment Committee adopted, only their [illegible] were supplied to Government and not the facts or arguments on which they relied and therefore, we, in the [illegible] had [illegible] to decide each point on its merits and without the advantage of hearing what the Retrenchment Committee had to say on it.

We are prepared to give the Council the reasons which influenced us in coming to a decision on each point, but it is hardly fair to launch a general denunciation of us without giving us an opportunity to justify our decision.

I now come to the last point and that is the remission of our provincial contribution. We have heard very little this afternoon on this subject; but I presume that members are already aware that the Government of India have come to the conclusion that we must again be given respite and they propose to allow the remission of the contribution for a further period of three years. This is the fruit of the application to which I referred in my Budget speech, and when the proposal goes through we shall be in the position, to which I alluded, of being able to make a further advance and get on with measures of sanitation and education. Instead of being in deficit in our normal expenditure we shall be Rs. 30 lakhs in surplus and have to draw only Rs. 26 lakhs on our balances at the present moment. Babu Surendra Nath Ray has referred to the fact that the contribution has been remitted only for three years. We may, I think, safely assume that the contribution will not be levied again. It would be unthinkable that we should be called upon to pay our contribution while other provinces are securing reduction. In any case I should not be surprised if with increasing prosperity there will be any question of contributions after the expiry of the three years. Taking that view, I think, we can count on this surplus as being a recurring surplus, available for recurring needs, needs of which we stand so much in want. Allusions have been made to our promise to give the proceeds of our new taxation towards the transferred departments; well, with this surplus we shall be able to fulfil in part our promise to do so. It is in a manner the fruits of our taxation; and we shall be in a position to give the Rs. 30 lakhs, or the bulk of it at any rate, to the needs of the transferred departments. It will be now for the Ministers to work out and bring forward schemes of development; and when the Council meets in the rains I have no doubt, that they will come forward with supplementary demands for the utilisation of this surplus. I think we may take it that our anxiety is practically at an end as regards the remission of our provincial contribution. We have not, however, abated our claim for a total revision of the Meston Settlement, and as I have said before on several occasions—and I repeated it in my Budget speech—we shall not lose sight of this question. Meawhile, we have secured a position which has produced a welcome change in our financial position. We need no longer keep on marking time, there is much to be done and can be done, even with the benefit that we have secured from this remission, and I can assure the Council that my hon'ble colleagues in the Executive Council will do all in their power to assist the new Ministers in the furtherance of schemes in which they, the Ministers, and all members of this Council, take so deep an interest.

Demands for Grants.

27—PORTS AND PILOTAGE (RESERVED).

The Hon'ble Mr. J. DONALD: I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 1,60,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "27—Ports and Pilotage" (Reserved).

The Memorandum which is before the members of Council explains the reasons for this demand. This follows on the acceptance by Government of the recommendation made by the Retrenchment Committee in the matter of the pooling of launches. We have, with certain exceptions, pooled our launches and have made special arrangements by which we shall be able to effect repairs for the Eastern Bengal launches in the proposed Dockyard at Narainganj. We have now a depôt at a distance of about four miles from Narainganj up the Lakhya river, but it is not a very suitable site and we shall have to spend much money in acquisition of the land and in the necessary buildings. This new site will be much better suited for our works and there are already several buildings all very adapted for our purpose. The matter is very fully explained in the Memorandum, and the green book which is now being handed round to members of Council will give an idea of what we propose to purchase. I can assure the Council that the scheme will prove to be a very remunerative one and effect a considerable saving in our charges for launches.

Babu MANMATHA NATH ROY: After hearing the statement which has been made by the Hon'ble Mr. Donald and going through the papers which have been circulated, I think it desirable to ask for leave to withdraw the motion.

The following motion was then, by leave of the Council, withdrawn:—

"That the demand of Rs. 1,60,000 under the head '27—Ports and Pilotage' be refused."

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. J. Donald was then put and agreed to.

37—MISCELLANEOUS DEPARTMENTS (RESERVED).

The Hon'ble Mr. J. DONALD: I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 38,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "37—Miscellaneous Departments" (Reserved).

This has also been explained in the Memorandum. The money is required to settle the accounts of the Calcutta Exhibition and the British Empire Exhibition.

The motion was put and agreed to.

45—SUPERANNUATION ALLOWANCES AND PENSIONS (RESERVED).

The Hon'ble Mr. J. DONALD: I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 5,50,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "45—Superannuation Allowances and Pensions" (Reserved).

The Memorandum on the subject is not quite accurate, and it does not quite disclose the actual state of affairs. As a matter of fact, the increase over the Budget estimate is due to two main causes. In the first place, it will be remembered that officers received a considerable increase in pay three years ago and, therefore, the pension of these officers on retirement has correspondingly increased, necessitating a larger provision in the total charges. Again, the system now adopted for the payment of pensions of retired officers living in other provinces has necessitated increased provision. Instead of merely paying to the other province the annual amount of the pensions of such officers, we capitalise the amount and make this over to the other Government, which then takes on the responsibility for future payments.

Babu Manmatha Nath Roy being absent, the following motion standing in his name was not moved:—

"That the demand of Rs. 5,50,000 under the head '45—Superannuation Allowances and Pensions' be refused."

Rai HARENDRANATH CHAUDHURI: What I cannot understand is this: how can this come under the Bengal Budget? That is my point.

The Hon'ble Mr. J. DONALD: I have just explained to the Council the main reasons for the increase. The adjustment of the amounts of the Post and Telegraph Departments is a minor item: it is a mere adjustment from last year - we are liable for the pension charges of retired officers of those departments whose pensions were sanctioned prior to April, 1921, and the additional figure is merely an adjustment which was not effected in the previous year.

The following motion of Rai Harendranath Chaudhuri was then, by leave of the Council, withdrawn:—

"That the demand of Rs. 5,50,000 under the head '45—Superannuation Allowances and Pensions' be reduced by Re. 1."

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. J. Donald was then put and agreed to.

51A—MISCELLANEOUS ADJUSTMENTS (RESERVED) BETWEEN CENTRAL AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS.

The Hon'ble Mr J. DONALD: I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 7,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "51A—Miscellaneous Adjustments between Central and Provincial Governments" (Reserved).

This is the cost of training of two officers in England for the Forest Service instead of one and we have had to double the provision.

The following motion standing in the name of Babu Manmatha Nath Roy was then, by leave of the Council, withdrawn:—

"That the demand of Rs. 7,000 for expenditure under the head '51A—Miscellaneous Adjustments' be refused.

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. J. Donald was then put and agreed to.

55—CONSTRUCTION OF IRRIGATION, NAVIGATION, EMBANKMENT AND DRAINAGE WORKS NOT CHARGED TO REVENUE (RESERVED).

The Hon'ble Maharaja KSHAUNISH CHANDRA RAY Bahadur of Nadia: I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 25,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "55—Construction of Irrigation, Navigation, Embankment and Drainage Works not charged to Revenue" (Reserved).

This has been clearly explained in the Memorandum which has been issued.

Rai HARENDRANATH CHAUDHURI: I sent in this motion when the Memorandum did not reach me. No new expenditure is proposed, but simply some additional expenditure for the purpose of giving enhanced compensation. I, therefore, beg leave to withdraw my motion.

The following motion was then, by leave of the Council, withdrawn:—

"That the demand of Rs. 25,000 for expenditure under the head '55—Construction of Irrigation, Navigation, Embankment and Drainage Works not charged to Revenue' be reduced by Re. 1."

The motion of the Hon'ble Maharaja Pahadur of Nadia was then put and agreed to.

Adjournment.

The Council was then adjourned till 3 P.M. on Tuesday, the 17th March, 1925, at the Town Hall, Calcutta.

B. O. Press—24-3-1925—1148M—1,602—A. F. A and others.